DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

‘Story teaches you things'

an exploratory study of the use of story as a resource for learning and teaching in the primary school classroom in Scotland

McGarry, Fiona

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Fiona McGarry

2014

University of Dundee

‘STORY TEACHES YOU THINGS’

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE USE OF STORY AS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM IN SCOTLAND

Fiona S. McGarry

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Declarations

a) The following thesis is based on the results of investigation carried out by me, is my own composition, and has not been previously presented for any degree. Unless otherwise stated, I have consulted all references cited.
The research was carried out under the supervision of Dr. Angela Roger and Professor David Miller.

(signed by candidate)

b) The conditions of the relevant Ordinance and Regulations have been fulfilled.

(signed by the supervisors)

Abstract

This study explores the ways in which story is used as a resource for learning and teaching in the primary school classroom. Definitions of story are explored and theoretical perspectives on narrative modes of cognitive processing, metaphor and analogy are discussed.

Story is widely used in the primary school classroom in Scotland, particularly in the Early Years (primaries 1-3), and an attempt is made to ascertain how far this is systematised, drawing on the perspectives of teachers and pupils in Scottish primary schools. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is used to attain an understanding of the way that story is used and perceived in the classroom.

The data that inform the study were collected in five parts – focus group interviews with storytellers and teachers; a local (Angus) teacher survey and student teachers' observations; surveys undertaken with schoolchildren in a Dundee primary school; interviews with teachers and primary school pupils in Angus, and a national teacher survey.

Results from the study show that systematic approaches to story are in use in Scotland, and that in addition to teachers, pupils also demonstrated a good deal of knowledge about the use of story in the classroom. Results from the national survey also indicated systematic approaches to story use.

There is some discussion on the articulation of story-based approaches to learning and teaching with the Scottish national curricular guidelines (Curriculum for Excellence), and suggestions are made as to how story might be used in Initial Teacher Education programmes.

Language note

In order to include both genders in the language used in this study, the class teacher is referred to throughout as 'she', and the pupil as 'he'.

I refer to myself in the first person as to do otherwise implies a degree of objectivity which would be misleading given the experiential basis informing the study. In all other instances, the forms he/him/his have been used in spite of their gender-specificity because the alternatives are either grammatically clumsy, or incorrect.

CHAPTER ONE: AIMS, RATIONALE, CONTEXT

This chapter explains why the study has been undertaken. An outline is offered of the project aims, and an overview of the five parts of the study is presented.

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The study is laid out in the following way:

Chapters One to Three set the context for the study.

- **Chapter One** – Aims, Rationale, Context sets out the aims of the project, introduces the thinking that informs it in terms of a conceptual framework, and discusses some of the practical and ethical considerations which had to be taken into account when working with young children such as those who formed some of the participants in the study.
- **Chapter Two** – Literature Review examines the literature which has informed the project and discusses that which is already known about story. This chapter explores story definitions, seeking to clarify some of the terminology. The role of story as an educational resource is introduced, and the ways in which story contribute to

meaning-making are explored. Some story-based educational programmes currently in use in schools are also examined.

- **Chapter Three** – Methodologies of the Study sets out the epistemological and ontological basis for the study and describes the methodological frameworks informing it. This chapter also considers sampling methods, data collection and analysis, and examines issues of generalisabilty, reliability and validity.

Chapters Four and Five present the empirical work (see definition on p.22) in five parts, and discuss the conclusions that can be drawn from these.

- **Chapter Four** – Results. This is presented in five distinct parts: Part 1 : Storyteller/Teacher Interviews; Part 2:Angus Teacher Surveys /Student Observations; Part 3: Dundee Primary School Story Sessions; Part 4: Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews, Part 5: National Survey. The findings from each part are discussed separately.
- **Chapter Five** – Discussion and Conclusions examines the outcomes of the data collection presented in the previous chapter, and draws conclusions about the use of story in the primary classroom based on these. This chapter suggests implications for practice, and makes recommendations for future investigation.

Chapters Six and Seven document some reflections on the study, note some of the developments that have already arisen from it, and add a post-script which looks back over the study in a holistic way.

- **Chapter Six** – Reflections and Further Developments addresses some issues which arose during the course of the study and sets out some of the ways in which findings from the study have already begun to inform practice.
- **Chapter Seven** – Post-script looks back over the whole study, and reflects on how the study was carried out.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The background to this study is twofold: it is rooted in the fact, as discussed in a later section (Section 2.3.1,p.52), that story has long been used as a medium for learning and teaching. Many sources are cited, *inter alia* Roe, Alfred and Smith (1998), all of whom discuss the various uses of story, and all of whom record support for the story form as a teaching tool that has been used in human society since pre-literate times. It is, as noted by Heywood (1998), universal in human culture.

The study is also based on my own experience and observation of the ways in which story is used in the modern primary school classroom, (see pages 20 and 109 for further discussion on experiential knowledge and recognition of the researcher as an instrument of the research).

The aim of this study is to respond to the research question

"What is the extent of story use in the Scottish primary school classroom, and what are teachers' purposes and beliefs about the use of story in support of learning?"

This question is further extended in Section 2.8 (p.101) in response to the review of the literature.

The study is based on three assumptions:

- Story is widely used in the primary school classroom as a resource for learning and teaching
- Story serves a wide range of classroom learning goals
- Decisions made by teachers when selecting stories for classroom use are not always well-considered or systematic

These assumptions form the initial hypothesis, and are derived as follows: of the teachers surveyed in the preliminary study, every one interviewed or surveyed agreed that she used story often in her classroom and my own professional observation also suggests that story is widely used in the classroom.

Having been for many years convinced of the efficacy of the medium of story as a teaching tool, I reflected on the degree of consideration given by classroom teachers to the selection of stories for classroom use. Evidence drawn from my own experience suggested that selection of stories was sometimes made on an *ad hoc* basis: stories were used in the classroom because they were there in book form; because they were recommended by a colleague; because the children brought them in to school from home; or because they were included in a book list prepared by an educational publisher. Alongside this, teachers also bring their professional judgment to bear on the selection of stories for classroom use. There are many complex and interconnected reasons why a teacher may select a particular story at a particular time, and decisions made about story selection may even be made at an almost

intuitive level by an experienced teacher who knows her class well, and who is familiar with the requirements of the curriculum.

1.3 CONCEPTUAL / THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

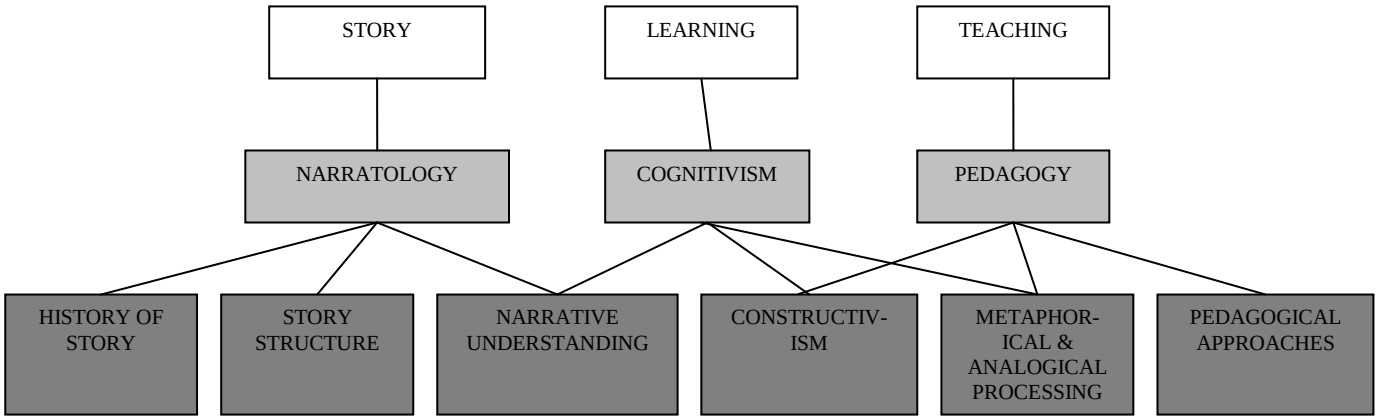


Figure 1. Conceptual and theoretical framework

The three layers in Figure 1 (above) represent:

1. (white) concepts addressed by the study. These are the ideas, or general notions, that motivated the project.
2. (pale grey) theoretical bases for the concepts. Theories represent systems of ideas that are intended to explain something.
3. (dark grey) aspects of theory. These are subsections of the theoretical approaches to which they are linked.

The study is conceptualised in terms of three key ideas (see Figure 1, layer 1 above, white): story, learning and teaching. These are informed

by a theoretical framework drawing on the areas of narratology, cognitivism and pedagogy (above, layer 2, pale grey), from which the aspects of history of story, story structure, narrative understanding, constructivism, metaphor and analogy and pedagogical approaches are derived (layer 3 above, dark grey) as being of particular relevance to the study in hand. As can be seen in the above figure, there is some degree of overlap in the theoretical aspects which link layers 2 and 3.

Key literature informing the aspects in level 3 is identified thus:

- History of Story: see section 2.3.2 - Ransome, 1909; Pellowski, 1977; Kearney, 2002; Hartley, 2009
- Story Structure: see section 2.2 - Holloway, 1979; Mandler, 1984; Bruner, 1986, 1990 and 1996; Wilensky, 2003; Abbott, 2008
- Narrative Understanding: see section 2.4 - Bruner, 1986, 1990 and 1996; Mink, 1965; Mandler, 1984, Lyle, 2000; Genereux and McKeough, 2007
- Constructivism: see section 2.6 - Piaget, 1929; Donaldson, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1986, 1990 and 1996
- Metaphor and analogy: see section 2.5.1 - Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey and Brown, 1986; Goswami, 1992; Bjorklund, 2005;
- Pedagogical approaches: see section 2.6 – Vygotsky, 1978; Egan 1986; Bruner, 1996; Cobley, 2001; Shirley, 2005; Harret, 2009.

The study sits, therefore, within the field of cognitive narratology (Herman, 2012) (which is informed by psychology and education, although elements of the study fall into the domains of sociology and, to a lesser

extent, anthropology). It refers to constructivist pedagogy (Piaget, 1929; Vygotsky, 1978), cognitive theory (Piaget, 1929; Bruner, 1966; 1986; 1990), story and narrative (*inter alia* Mandler, 1984; Livo and Rietz, 1986; Temple and Gillet 1989). It explores the use of storytelling as a teaching method (Lauritzen and Jaeger, 1997; Roe, Alfred and Smith, 1998; Kearney, 2002), and seeks to establish the extent of story use as an educational medium in the Scottish primary school classroom. Discussion of learning theory in terms of different cognitive modes is used to examine how learning theory might apply to the use of story as a vehicle for learning. Consideration of some of the reasons people use stories is a factor in this study. Furthermore, how these might be applied in an educational context, where the needs of not only the listener, but also the aims of the teacher and the curriculum are to be met develop from this consideration.

A further factor informing the conceptual framework for the study is the pedagogical imperative deriving from the introduction in 2010 of the *Curriculum for Excellence* in Scottish schools. *Curriculum for Excellence* is the title of the national curriculum guidelines documentation for Scotland (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009). A main theme running through *Curriculum for Excellence* is the integrated and holistic approach to teaching and learning which is flexible, relevant and tailored to the needs of all pupils in Scottish schools. In order to meet the requirements of this curriculum, teachers must frame their practice in terms of pedagogies that reflect this approach. This study considers the capacity of story to meet these requirements.

Narratology is not viewed as a single discipline, but rather encompasses a variety of narratological approaches (Nünning, 2004). Story and storytelling practices fall within the scope of the study of cognitive narratology, defined by Herman (2011, paragraph 1, no page number), as 'the study of mind-relevant aspects of storytelling practices'. Herman (2003) discusses the use of story as a 'cognitive artefact', i.e. a construct (either physical or mental) which can be used as a tool to support thinking. He notes that organising information in narrative form enables listeners to establish links between areas of experience and that this in turn promotes and enhances cognition. Talmy (2000, p.419) claims that narrative's inherent pattern-forming device functions 'to connect and integrate certain components of conscious content over time into a coherent ideational structure.' This would make story, as an artefact of cognitive narratology, a worthy component in the class teacher's battery of pedagogical approaches. Herman (*ibid),* notes that there are other such artefacts, for example trans-media works, cinema, blogs, etc.

Story itself is discussed, and definitions of story and narrative are explored (*inter alia* Mandler, 1984; Temple and Gillet, 1989; Lauritzen and Jaeger, 1997) in order to clarify the parameters of the study. Alongside this, storytelling is considered - what it is, who is involved, and why people do it. Storytelling is a traditional means of sharing information, and for this reason a brief history of the practice is presented. It is also a useful strategy for engaging listeners in discussion of abstract concepts by relating these to the actions, dilemmas and experiences of characters outside of themselves. Storytelling requires listeners and tellers. In the

case of stories used in an educational context, this is (usually) the teacher and the pupils. Because of this, stories used in the classroom have to meet the needs of the pupils in terms of their level of interest and understanding, and also the aims of the teachers in terms of content.

Stories are enjoyable and entertaining, but stories with a connected narrative require some effort on the part of the listener to achieve understanding (Ryan, 2010). They force the listener to interact with the narrative in order to organise the information into a coherent form. It is therefore essential that the stories used encourage engagement, otherwise children will not make the necessary effort to process the information, and the potential learning experience will be lost.

In order to do this, the story must be framed in terms that are not only accessible, but also attractive to the target audience. What makes a 'good' story will vary from audience to audience: what may engage one group, may bore or even repel another. Stories used in an educational context have to meet the needs not only of the children but they also have to meet the aims of the teacher. It is therefore necessary to consider what both pupils and teachers regard as the attributes of an effective story, with the aim of investigating shared criteria.

The term 'storytelling' is used to describe an activity that can be further subdivided since there are various styles of activity that might fall into the category of 'storytelling'. Traditionally, storytelling is thought of as an oral activity that takes place without the support of a written text: the storyteller has memorised the framework of a story, and retells it in his own words, directly to the listening audience. Within the context of this

study, the term is used more broadly, based on an understanding of the term as derived though consultation with teachers and storytellers (see Appendix 3, p.407, Question 3) . The resultant definition includes the reading of a text, and the sharing of this, either with or without interaction with the audience; radio or television broadcast, or tape, CD or film recordings by a party who is not present; and also stories that are presented to the audience in a dramatised form – again, on TV, radio, audio/video recording or by live actors in a play. There is some further discussion on the rationale for this definition of storytelling in the final chapter (Chapter Six, p.369).

The research paradigm within which this work is situated is largely qualitative and constructivist (see Chapter Three: Methodologies of the Study, p.102, although some quantitative data are discussed, particularly in respect of the teachers' surveys (both local and national). It should be noted at this point the experiential basis of the writer (myself) which forms a background to this study. Maxwell (2004) observes that so far as qualitative research is concerned, the researcher is an instrument of the research, and rather than attempting to eliminate experiential knowledge, the researcher should recognise it as a valuable component of the work. Maxwell is supported in his thinking by, *inter alia*, Glesne and Peshkin (1992). That is not to say that this should form the sole basis for the work, but that it can provide a valid perspective so long as it is made explicit. This is considered again in a later section (3.1.3. Epistemology, p.107).

1.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

As indicated in 1.2 (p.13), the question to which this project seeks to respond is:

'What is the extent of story use in the Scottish primary school classroom, and what are teachers' purposes and beliefs about the use of story in support of learning?'

This question is further refined in the light of the review of the literature (Chapter Two, p.101)

In response to this question, the study was undertaken in five parts. An overview is provided in section 3.2 (p.111) outlining the chronology, and the articulation of the parts. In Part One (Storyteller/Teacher Interviews), a working definition of the term 'story' was sought (see Appendix 3, p.407, Question 3), which is then used throughout the study. In order to do this, not only teachers, but also others working with story in a wider educational forum: medical and social workers, librarians, entertainers, and lay persons were interviewed. Part Two (Angus Teacher Survey) looks to establish how far, and for what purposes, teachers use story in the classroom. The results from this survey were used to inform a later, wider survey. In Part Three (the Dundee Primary School Story Sessions), the responses of some primary school pupils to a particular set of stories are explored. In doing this, indications were sought of those aspects of story pupils found engaging. Part Four (Angus Schools' Pupil and Teacher Interviews) focussed on pupils in Early Years' classes in four primary schools and sought their perspectives on the attributes of a good story, comparing this with the perspectives of teachers in the same

schools (in the context of this study, ‘Early Years’ refers to the first two years of formal schooling, or Primaries 1 and 2 in the Scottish education system). Part Five (the National Survey) consulted teachers in state primary schools across the whole of Scotland by means of an electronic survey, in order to broaden the scope of the data collected in Part Two. Over the study as a whole the aim was to determine how widespread story use is as a resource for teaching and learning, and to explore what both pupils and teachers want from story. This information could potentially be used to inform classroom practice.

1.5 SUMMARY

The study was undertaken to explore how story is used as a teaching medium in Scottish primary classrooms.

The conceptual framework for the study situates the work in the fields of narratology and cognitivism, with some discussion on both narrative theory and constructivist approaches to pedagogy.

An exposition is offered on the original contribution of this work to the field, and this is identified as being the presentation of a synthesized model of story grammar, as well as being illuminative in respect of the current practice of teachers in Scotland, and of the metacognitive abilities of pupils.

The empirical study (that is, that part of the study based on direct or indirect observation or experience) was undertaken in five parts. Adelman and Young (1985) refer to the empiricist tradition in educational research

as being one that

> *assumes that knowledge of educational practice can be collected through the senses, assisted, in many cases, by instrumentation.* (p.47)

Each of the five parts was designed to illuminate aspects of story use in the classroom, and to articulate with the study as a whole: information gathered at each stage informed the subsequent part of the investigation (see overview in Table 7, p.111).

The following chapter continues to set the scene for the study by exploring the literature on some of the concepts addressed by the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines what is already known about story and its uses. Definitions of story are explored, the place of story in society in general and in educational contexts in particular is discussed, and the development of story from its historical origins to the present day is traced, providing a rationale for the study.

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE REVIEW

The over all aim of this literature review is to explore the contribution that story can make to the quality and effectiveness of the educational experience.

2.1.1 Aim, background and objectives

The literature review maps out the context in which the study takes place, and develops the theoretical perspectives which guided the study. The main part of the literature review was undertaken between October 2007 and March 2009 during the initial stages of the project, but it has continued to be revised and updated throughout the course of the study. The objectives of the literature review are:

- to explore and define the terms ‘story’ and ‘narrative’, given that these are used interchangeably in many sources. Story definitions

thus established will be compared with teacher definitions, which will then be used in the study.

- to examine the place of story in society, tracing its origins and history; and to consider its current and future status.
- to consider how meaning is derived from stories.
- to look at some of the ways story is currently being used in an educational context.

2.1.2 Scope of the review

The review examined literature focussing on the aims and objectives noted above, and was confined to work written in English that referred to educational contexts, particularly (but not exclusively) those written in reference to Early Years' education. In the context of this study, 'Early Years' education' refers to the early years of the formal education system in the United Kingdom (known as 'elementary' grades K - 2 in the United States). This corresponds in Scotland to primary school classes 1 to 3, and in England and Wales to Reception and Key Stage 1.

The literature reviewed included books, professional periodicals and journal articles.

2.1.3 Review methods

An inductive approach was taken to the literature search. This approach uses a 'bottom up' model, which involves a degree of uncertainty: there is no predetermined outcome, but rather, the research path followed depends on the outcomes of observations made along the way. These specific observations lead to patterns which can produce generalisations, which can then inform theory. This particular research

project began with some specific reading: Bettelheim (1975), and Egan (1986), and these provided some initial references which were then followed up. The alternative, deductive approach, would have involved the generation of a research question which would have led to the testing of an initial hypothesis. This would then have been confirmed or refuted by the study. Appendix 1, p.410, offers an illustration of the two approaches.

A first search was conducted using the University of Dundee Library electronic search facility, with the search terms ‘story’ and ‘storytelling’ (see Appendix 2, p.411, Literature Review – Search Process). No constraint was applied to the date of publication, as I was already aware of some influential literature which dated back some time, and did not wish to exclude other, older publications with which I was not already familiar. This initial search produced a large number of results from a variety of disciplines including psychology, medicine, literary review, ecology and biodiversity, and broadcast media. These were in the form of books, journals, newspapers and articles in periodicals and e-journals. This range of results was refined according to type of publication, subject term, and by adding the further keywords ‘school’, ‘teaching’, ‘learning’, ‘elementary’ to the search. The U.S. term ‘elementary’ as well as the U.K. ‘primary’ was used, as it had already been noted that much of the research in this subject area originated from the United States.

A further literature search was conducted using the Dialog interface to access three commercial databases to ensure as wide a coverage as possible, and to allow triangulation across the sets of search results, to maximise returns. The three databases used were: British Education Index

(BEI), the Australian Education Index (AEI) and the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). Additionally, CSA Illumina was used, which allowed access to the Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA). Web of Knowledge was also used. The searches in each instance were refined to some extent, either by adding keywords (for example, 'school', 'teaching', 'learning', 'elementary' as above) or by general category (social sciences, and arts and humanities), before being sifted by title and abstract to produce a final selection of documents to be read. As in the case of the initial search, no constraints were put on publication date, for the reasons given above.

Throughout the course of the project, both the search engine Google and the online bookseller Amazon were referred to, although not conventional resources for academic literature searching, in order to continue to check on newly published work which might not yet have appeared in the databases above.

References in the texts accessed were followed up and bibliographies in these texts were also used to identify further reading. The literature search continued in this inductive way throughout the course of the project.

2.1.4 Structure of the review

The review is structured around the objectives noted below in Table 1. Section 2.2 (p.28) of the review provides a discussion of some of the terminology, and looks in particular at ideas about 'story' and 'narrative' (in response to the first objective). Section 2.3 (p.52) considers how uses and forms of story have developed over history, beginning with oral storytelling

as a way of recording history and events, of responding to the need for entertainment and for aesthetic-expressive goals, and also as a way of establishing cultural norms (relating to the second objective). Sections 2.4 (p.63) and 2.5 (p70) explore the cognitive structures that support the understanding of stories, and discuss paradigmatic and narrative modes of cognition (Bruner, 1986). These sections also consider children's predisposition to the use of metaphor and analogy, and some of the ways teachers can support the analogical processes inherent in the story form (relating to the third objective). Section 2.6 (p.80) examines evidence from some current educational programmes in use in schools and demonstrates the effectiveness of the story form in supporting learning in a variety of contexts.

Table 1. Objectives of the literature review.

Section of the Literature Review	***Objective addressed***
2.2 Story and Narrative	to explore and define the terms 'story' and 'narrative', given that these are used interchangeably in many sources, and to establish definitions which will be followed up in the study.
2.3 Importance of Story	to examine the place of story in society, tracing its origins and history, and to consider its current and future status.
2.4 Narrative Understanding and Meaning-Making	to consider how meaning is derived from stories.
2.5 Metaphor and Analogy	to consider ways in which meaning is presented in stories
2.6 Story and Pedagogy	to look at some of the ways story is currently being used in an educational context.

2.2 STORY AND NARRATIVE

In order to explore how story is used in the classroom, it would be useful to discuss how the word itself is understood. The term 'story' is widely recognised, and used in everyday speech, and yet understanding

of the term is at best nebulous. A story exists only in the abstract – it cannot be felt, or touched, or seen. The words can be read, the music can be heard, or the picture seen that tells a story; but they are not the thing itself. They are merely the conductor, the medium through which the story is told (or revealed). This duality in understanding of what a story 'is' informs the following discussion.

2.2.1 What is a 'story'?

While it may be difficult to ascribe a definitive meaning to the term 'story', some of the literature on the subject provides insights into the ways the term is understood. Polkinghorne (1988), for example, discusses three distinct forms of story – the first a narrative construction in which '… human actions cohere according to plots.' (p.22); the second, which he describes as a representation of an experience in a '… language message to others in various forms including speaking, writing, drama.' (*ibid.)*; and the third which is the understanding (including the interpretation) of ideas represented. Polkinghorne's definitions, then, are both abstract (story-idea) and concrete (story-representation), but all three refer to story as a language-based notion. He does not refer to story as having any particular structure, or shape, unlike (*inter alia*) Livo and Rietz (1986), Egan (1986), Gabriel (2000) and Kearney (2002), all of whom refer to the idea that stories have a beginning, middle and an end. Bruner (1986), while not specific about this particular shape, also refers to the notion that stories are constructed or reconstructed according to a particular framework or 'grammar' (see 2.2.2, p.32 below). Engel (1990),

who does not define story structure *per se,* acknowledges its existence in referring to ‘complete’ stories and story ‘fragments’.

There is an understanding that the term story can be applied not only to fictional and historical, but also personal narratives (*inter alia* Bruner, 1986; Kearney, 2002; McDrury and Alterio, 2003; Moon, 2010). All of these writers describe story as a sense-making device, and some are explicit about its role as a way of representing experience to others (Polkinghorne, 1988; Engel,1990; Gabriel, 2000).

Boje (2001) refers to story as being ‘antenarrative’ which he describes as ‘fragmented, non-linear, incoherent, collective, unplotted and pre-narrative …’ His claim is that story *precedes* narrative as it describes a state that exists previously to narrative. In the sense that the concept of narrative presupposes a means of discourse (i.e. in order to be a narrative, an idea must be narrated), Boje’s definition is very apposite. In that sense, Boje’s definition of story is perhaps closest to that which is described below as ‘soft’ story, or story-idea (see 2.2.5 , p.42 below). Boje maintains that it is narrative that adds plot and coherence to a story line.

Even the form that story takes is open to debate. While many writers (*inter alia* Livo and Rietz, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988) define story in verbal terms (written or spoken), Gerrig (1993), who talks in terms of ‘narrative worlds’ rather than ‘stories’ (p.3) refers to books, movies, paintings and television, and Moon’s (2010) definition includes music, mime, drama and touch.

As the above discussion shows, there is no simple definition of the term ‘story’. There are, however, some broad areas of agreement. Stories

can be fictional, historical or personal narratives. Most writers agree that stories have a particular structure, and that they are representational. There is, however, no absolute agreement on the form this representation might take, with many writers subscribing to the notion that stories are verbal entities, while for others stories are understood as being evidenced in a wider variety of media.

2.2.2 Story grammar

In her discussion of the concept of a 'story', Jean Mandler (1984) distinguishes two ideas: the 'story grammar', and the 'story schema'. The first, she maintains, is a rule system and is concerned with describing the story. Temple and Gillet (1989) explain a story grammar as defining story elements and their allowable orders. The story schema, in contrast, is defined by Mandler as a mental structure – it is the understanding of what a story 'is' or what we expect of a story. In describing story grammar, Mandler adheres to the common principle noted in the preceding section, that a story will have a beginning, that it will have an end, and that something (or several things) will happen in between. (it should be noted here that although a story may be understood as having these three constituent parts, they are not of necessity recorded, or recounted in that order. This difference between the telling or conveying of a story and the understanding of it will be further discussed later in this chapter (see 2.2.3 below, p.39). Mandler is supported in her thinking by Abbott (2008), who, although he does not refer to beginning, middle and end, does agree that there is in a story a series of events which proceed chronologically from earliest to latest.

Mandler (1984) produced the following table which outlines an underlying structure, the story grammar, which she maintains can be typically applied to all stories:

Table 2. Mandler's 'rewrite' rules for the base structures of simple stories.

STORY	→	**Setting and EPISODE**
EPISODE	→	**BEGINNING Cause DEVELOPMENT Cause ENDING** **EPISODE and EPISODE^{n}** **then**
BEGINNING	→	**Beginning Event** **EPISODE**
DEVELOPMENT	→	**Complex Reaction Cause GOAL PATH** **Simple Reaction Cause Action** **DEVELOPMENT cause DEVELOPMENT**
COMPLEX REACTION	→	**Simple Reaction Cause Goal**
GOAL PATH	→	**Attempt Cause OUTCOME**
OUTCOME	→	**Outcome Event** **EPISODE**
ENDING	→	**Ending Event** **EPISODE**

Note: Nonterminal 'nodes' are written in upper case (Mandler, 1984).

Each of the constituents ('nodes' in Mandler's terminology) noted in Table 2 (above) connects to the one that follows. This set of rules can characterise even complex stories with many episodes which interconnect in various ways. These elements reappear in stories, forming highly similar structures enabling the listener to keep track of the story line, and to form a general schema of the way stories are put together. The listener can also determine which constituent a sentence belongs to on the basis of its relation to those coming before and after it.

The following is an example of the application of the above rules to a well-known children's story:

Once upon a time there were three bears. The bears lived in a cottage in a wood. One morning, Mummy Bear called Daddy and Baby Bear to breakfast. ***(STORY – Setting and EPISODE)***
Mummy Bear put some porridge in each of the three bowls, but the Bears decided that the porridge was too hot, and so they thought they would go out for a walk to let the porridge cool down. ***(EPISODE – BEGINNING – Cause – DEVELOPMENT – ENDING).***
While they were out, a girl called Goldilocks, who was lost in the wood, went into the house and ate the porridge ***(BEGINNING – Beginning Event – EPISODE)***
She then went on to sit down on all of the chairs in the house, eventually breaking one of them because she was too big for it. ***(EPISODE)***
Goldilocks then went upstairs, and lay down on each of the beds in turn until she fell asleep on the smallest bed.
(DEVELOPMENT)
When the three Bears came home they were upset to find their food had been eaten, and their furniture damaged. ***(COMPLEX REACTION – Simple Reaction)***
*They looked around the house, and went upstairs to look for the intruder.(****Simple Reaction – Cause – Goal)***
They woke Goldilocks ***(GOAL PATH – Attempt– Cause – Outcome)****, who leapt from the bed and ran away in fright* ***(OUTCOME – Outcome Event – EPISODE).***
Goldilocks never ever went into the woods on her own again ***(ENDING – Ending Event – EPISODE),*** *and the three Bears were careful to keep their door locked whenever they went out from then on* ***(Ending Event – EPISODE),*** *so they all lived happily ever after* ***(Ending Event)***

In studies by Brewer and Lichtenstein (1980) and Stein and Policastro (1984), people were asked to rank stories for acceptability, or for how ‘good’ a story is. These studies noted that in stories where constituent parts of an episode were absent, these were ranked by listeners as less acceptable than those which had all the required parts.

Meyer and Rice (1984) made attempts to describe and present sets of patterns and rules which result in a formula for acceptable story structures. Most of these include a variation on the setting / episode(s) / outcome structure which forms the basis of Mandler’s rewrite rules

(Table 2 above). The significance is that a story is a story because it follows a generally accepted set of conventions which has become recognised. Livo and Rietz (1986, p.33) produced a 'story map', outlined in Table 3 below, which takes account of Mandler's earlier model.

Table 3. Livo and Rietz's Story Map.

1.	**Introduction to setting/character: Events in setting category – development of the problem**
2.	**Problem**
3.	**Event Sequence (and they provide several alternative versions of this)**
4.	**Resolution (problem solution)**
5.	**Conclusion**
6.	**Moral (not always present)**

This 'story map' is much more straightforward and easily understood than Mandler's Rewrite Rules, but does appear to reinforce the same ideas. This map can be applied to the story of The Three Bears as follows:

> *Once upon a time there were three bears. The bears lived in a cottage in a wood.*
> *(**Introduction to setting/character)***
> *One morning, Mummy Bear called Daddy and Baby Bear to breakfast. (**Events in setting category – development of the problem)***
> *Mummy Bear put some porridge in each of the three bowls, but the Bears decided that the porridge was too hot, and so they thought they would go out for a walk to let the porridge cool down (**Problem)**. While they were out, a girl called Goldilocks, who was lost in the wood, went into the house and ate the porridge (**Event 1).** She then went on to sit down on all of the chairs in the house, eventually breaking one of them because she was too big for it **(Event 2)**. Goldilocks went upstairs, and lay down on each of the beds in turn until she fell asleep on the smallest bed **(Event 3)**. When the three Bears came home they were upset to find their food had been eaten, and their furniture damaged **(Event 4)**. They looked around the house, and went upstairs to look for the intruder (**Event 5)**. They woke Goldilocks **(Resolution)**, who leapt from the bed and ran away in fright **(Conclusion)**. Goldilocks never ever went into the woods on her own again **(Moral)**, and the three Bears were careful to keep their door locked whenever they went out from then on **(Moral)**, so they all lived happily ever after.*

Lauritzen and Jaeger (1997) define as story only narratives which contain five key elements; see Table 4 (below).

Table 4. Lauritzen and Jaeger's Story Definition

1.	**Setting**
2.	**Characters**
3.	**Action directed towards goals**
4.	**Causation**
5.	**Significance**

A further diagram of story structure produced by Temple and Gillet (1989), and reproduced below (Table 5) reinforces many of the ideas established by earlier writers.

Table 5. Temple and Gillet's Story Structure

Story	**=**	**Setting + Initiating Event →**
Goal	→	**{Attempt → Outcome}** **{Attempt → Outcome} → Consequence → (Reaction)** **{And so on}**

Key:
= means 'is made up of'
→ means 'causes or leads to'
{} mean 'choose one or more of the enclosed elements'
( ) mean 'you may choose or omit the enclosed element'

In examining these four 'story maps' or diagrams, it can be seen that there are commonalities. Each diagram represents the story as having a distinct starting point which describes a setting and an initiating event. Each map contains one or more episodes (defined as 'events'), and these have their own outcomes or goals. Each map ends with a final conclusion (variously called causation, outcome, or consequence). Additionally, each map adds a further stage, the 'reaction' (or moral / significance /coda/ ending) which explains or rationalises the story.

This last is described as an optional element, and is not explicitly present in every story. However, there is a case for suggesting that even where not explicit this final stage is *implicitly* present insofar that it represents the sense made of the story by the audience. That being the case, there may be more than one 'reaction' to the story, depending on the way the story is interpreted. According to constructivist theory (Bruner,1966) the listener's interpretation of a story will be constructed in the light of his own experience .

In the context of their work with computer reading programmes, Anderson and Evans (1996) synthesized the models offered by previous writers and offered a new 'canonical' model (Table 6 below):

Table 6. Canonical Story Grammar Model (CSGM)

Element	**Definition**
Setting	Introduction of the main character and description of the time, location, and/or social context of the story.
Beginning Event	A cause which initiates a reaction or response of the main character.
Internal Reaction	An emotional response by the character which leads to the creation of a goal.
Attempt	An action of the character to achieve the goal.
Ending	Attainment or nonattainment of the goal by the character and/or the character's reaction to the outcome and/or a moral.

Even this model, however, needs some explanation: hence the inclusion within the model of 'definitions'. My own simplified story map (Table 7 below) synthesises the main elements of those offered by the previously noted writers, and requires no definitions: the categories are self-explanatory.

Table 7. Story map

1*	**Setting + initiating event →**
2*	**Event →outcome (x *n)* →**
3*	**Conclusion →**
4	**(Reaction)**

Key:
→ means 'leads to'
n means any number
( ) means optional
**constituents thus indicated may appear in any order*

In the story map offered above (Table 7), it is important to note that although the constituents 1*-3* are all present in any given story, the order in which they appear may alter depending on the way the story is presented. For example, although a story will have an initiating event, this may be revealed retrospectively in the chronology of the narration (as in 'flashback' sequences). Constituent (4), however, where present, is inevitably the final one, as this refers to the 'sense' made of the story by the listener. The differences between the models offered in Table 6 (p.36) (Anderson and Evans, 1996) and Table 7 (above) are of emphasis. The latter model combines setting and initiating event because, in contrast with Anderson and Evans' model, it is argued that not all stories contain an 'Introduction of the main character and description of the time, location, and/or social context of the story', but may begin with an event, allowing the listener/reader to gradually deduce information about character and setting as the events of the story unfold. Further, the central components, the 'beginning event /internal reaction /attempt' have been combined under the umbrella label 'events', as these are unquestionably all types of events. The model outlined in Table 7 allows for these to be repeated *ad finem.* Although Anderson and Evans' model refers to the outcome and/or

moral, the model proposed in Table 7 (above) separates these two components in order to emphasise that they are different from each other.

The story-grammar approach to understanding stories is not without its critics. Wilensky (1983) recognises that grammars can be found that characterise stories, but he notes that these merely *describe* stories: they do not tell us what a story *is*. It is his contention that as stories are not concrete objects, but instead exist in the abstract world of ideas, the notion of a fixed story-grammar or map does not describe what a story is, but rather the way it appears in text. Rumelhart (1975) argues that story grammars are in fact representations of story schemata, that is, the mental structures that make up stories (see 2.2.3 below, p.39), and if understood as such can provide a construct for the understanding of story. Wilensky (1983) records his support for this notion, while at the same time contending that story grammarians (such as Mandler, above) simply offer a framework for the textual analysis of story. Wilensky (*ibid.)* offers an alternative means of analysing story that he calls the theory of 'story points'. He describes story points as 'schematizing those contents that could constitute stories' (*ibid.,* p.591). In that respect, there is little difference between Wilensky's 'story points' and Rumelhart's (1975) 'schemata'.

Other writers (*inter alia* van Dijk, 1983) suggest that Wilensky's arguments against story grammars as a way of describing stories are marginal: van Dijk holds that story grammars are not in fact 'grammars' in the traditional sense (they do not provide 'building blocks') but are rather

semiotic grammars (that is, they are a symbolic framework intended to represent the notion of how meaning is created).

Although Wilensky (1983) suggests that story grammars are representations of story schemata, and Rumelhart (1980) uses the term 'grammar' to refer to both text and schema, Mandler (1983) insists that it is important not to confuse text (story form) with cognitive structure (story schema).

2.2.3 Story schemata

Mandler (1989) notes that people have a great deal of abstract knowledge about stories, and that this is related to the human tendency to impose structure on the world in order to formulate some kind of understanding of it. Humans seek to impose meaning on even random events and occurrences, and in so doing construct frameworks into which experiences can be placed. This framework of understanding applies no less to story than to any other area of experience and is known as a story *schema.* Schemata (or schemas) are abstract, and enable listeners or readers to construct meaning based on their knowledge of the world : story schemata are a way of understanding story based on life experience. Temple and Gillet (1989) make the point that as an individual's schemata for things (including stories) are the result of his own past experiences, no two people will interpret a situation in exactly the same way. Thus, no two people will interpret a story in exactly the same way, as each will apply his own story schema, and come to his own conclusion. The understanding of a story can be said therefore to be constructed by its audience, as it can only be interpreted through the experience of the individual. In this way,

two people can be presented with the same story (for example, *Cinderella*), and each can understand something different: on the one hand, perhaps, a tale of trial and hardship alleviated only by mystical intervention and on the other the simple triumph of good over evil.

Mandler conducted several studies in which she attempted to measure both understanding and recall of storylines and she collected a great deal of data on the workings of story schemata during recall. She cites studies in which she examined the major constituents of stories, and noted that readers typically knew when they were moving across constituent boundaries. Readers used implicit knowledge of story structure to organise their understanding of the trajectory of the story. Since stories vary widely in their presentation, Mandler noted that this was not simply a linear process, but that the readers were able to discern topic shifts in the story.

In discussion of the validity of story schemas, Mandler concludes the following:

- Story schemata are hierarchical in organisation (see Table 1, p.28, wherein constituents are embedded within episodes).
- They are ordered, abstract (they do not specify content in any detail), and known. Some of these elements of a story schema influence processing.
- The adoption of a story schema aids understanding.

2.2.4 Story forms

In exploring the boundaries of stories, Moon (2010) defines two distinct forms, which, although they have overlapping features that

allow both to be categorised as ‘story’, are distinguished by some subtle differences. Moon (*ibid.)* notes that the kind of stories described by *inter alia* Mandler (1989) above, fall into a category that she defines as ‘strong-form’ story. These types of stories (and she offers an extensive list of words and features associated with them) are those often used for entertainment (sometimes primarily so, or else, as in the case of stories used to pass on information, as an engagement strategy). She further identifies a category of ‘broad-form’ stories. These are not stories in the traditional sense, in that, while strong-form stories conform to the ‘beginning-middle-end’ structure defined above, broad-form stories do not *necessarily* have this shape (although they may have).

Key differences between the two forms are that the broad-form story is often a personal account of an event (perhaps a case history), and more likely to be told for the teller’s benefit (the strong-form story is more likely to be told for the benefit of the listener). Examples of stories that fall into the category of broad-form story may be personal narratives elicited by healthcare professionals, and reflective accounts used to highlight and explore professional issues by managers, educators or trainers. In the primary classroom, broad-form story might, be used, for example, as a tool for reflection in *Circle Time* (Mosley, 2006), an approach to school management which helps teachers support self-esteem and positive behaviour, or in Metasaga (Josefsson, 2010), to learn about landscape and heritage. Professional and reflective use of story is noted in section 2.3.2 (p55)

2.2.5 Narrative

Abbott (2008) defines story as one of the aspects of narrative. In Abbott's definition, story '…entails movement …internally …' (Abbott, 2008, p.16). That is to say, there is in story an understanding of a sequence of events, the time these events take place in, and the order in which they occur (even though they may or may not be conveyed in that order). He differentiates this from 'narrative' which, while it includes the sequence of events which constitutes the storyline, also entails movement 'externally'. In this he refers to the actual (real) time it takes to move through the sequence of events in the story (for example, a novel may tell a story which spans many years, and yet it will take only some hours to read. This is the 'external' time span of the narrative).

A further aspect of narrative identified by Abbott *(ibid.)* is that of narrative *discourse.* In referring to the 'discourse' of the narrative, he is referring to the mode of representation. Therefore, the narrative discourse of a novel is the written word, whereas in a painting the discourse is pictorial representation. Abbott's succinct definition is this: 'narrative is the representation of events, consisting of story and narrative discourse; story is an event or sequence of events (the action); and narrative discourse is those events as represented.' (Abbott, 2008, p.19).

It is clear, then, that he distinguishes story from narrative, insofar that he defines narrative as consisting of both story AND discourse.

To summarise Abbott's definition:

- story is the abstract notion
- discourse is the means by which it is conveyed

- narrative is the combination of i) and ii) above

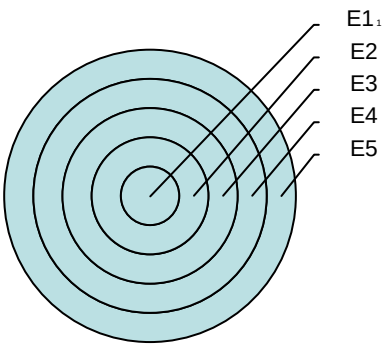
There is, however, a problem with this, which is related to the definition of ‘story’ arrived at previously (see Table 6, p.36). According to this definition, stories have four components, the first of which is ‘setting + initiating event’, and the third is ‘conclusion’. It is evident that not all narratives have an explicitly stated setting (or even initiating event). Neither do they all have conclusions (is an episode from a soap opera not a narrative?). *Waiting For Godot* (Beckett, 2006) is a classic example of a narrative with no physical setting in terms of ‘place’, no initiating event and no conclusion, and yet no-one would argue that it is not narrative. It does not fit the ‘story’ model previously offered. It does, however, have a clear story-line, that is, it contains the *possibility* of both a beginning and an end. As Abbott’s definition does not appear to fit all cases of narrative, I propose it should be adapted thus:

- story is the abstract notion
- discourse is the means by which the story-line is conveyed
- narrative is the combination of discourse and story-line

This is a subtle distinction, but one that better fits all examples of narrative, and which takes account of story definition.

Holloway (1979) takes another view. His definition maintains that ‘narratives comprise (1) events which happen in (2) states of affairs: neither (1) nor (2) is sufficient to make up a narrative by itself’ (Holloway, 1979, p.5). He does not address the issue of discourse, nor the relationship between story and narrative. He goes on to discuss in detail

the proposition that although a narrative may be made up of a sequence of events, it is the interrelationship between events rather than the sequence itself which informs a narrative. For Holloway, the key feature of a narrative is the way it is understood. In his definition of narrative, where a series of events is described, they remain no more than a list unless they are understood in terms of their relation to each other. He goes on to explain that we should think of a narrative not as a set of events, but as a 'set of sets: each member of this total set is a set of events which represents the narrative *so far as we have read up to a certain point in it'* (Holloway, 1979, p7). He maintains that as each section of the narrative is received, we revise our understanding of the 'story so far' as a whole, forming a new total sense. This is illustrated in the following diagram (Figure 2) showing a narrative with five events (E 1-5):



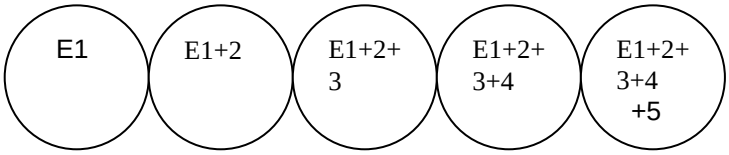
Key: E=event

Figure 2. Narrative structure (i)

Each ring of the diagram shows the progression towards the goal, that is, the completed story. The narrative is not understood in a simple linear fashion, but rather a new holistic understanding is reached after each event is added, an understanding which synthesises all the events

which have occurred so far. The illustration above could, of course, be continued *ad infinitum*.

An alternative illustration of the same principle is shown in Figure 3 below:



E=event

…and so on

Figure 3. Narrative Structure (ii)

Holloway's definition of narrative depends on the interrelationship between members of the sets of events. He considers narrative 'not as one sequence of events but as an interrelated set of sequences' (Holloway, 1979, p.75), and maintains that each subsequent set must be interpreted in the light of all that has gone before, not only the immediately preceding event. This is particularly true as the writer may have opted to describe the events of the narrative out of time-sequence; he may have omitted to include certain pieces of information altogether, making it incumbent on the reader to make inferences; or he may have included information which is irrelevant to the narrative altogether. In this way it becomes imperative that the 'wholeness' of the narrative is considered, rather than the individual items of which it is constituted. This might be illustrated by the following statement: 'The girl fell down and hurt her

knee*.'* We understand this as a narrative when we assume that *because* the girl fell down, she hurt her knee. She did not have an injured knee at the start of the narrative. By the end of the narrative, she was not only somewhere else, 'down', but had also hurt her knee as a result of falling. We have interpreted the hurt knee in the light of the preceding event, 'the falling down'. Were we to interpret this statement in a non-narrative sense, we would infer no connection between the falling down, and the hurt knee. Maybe she hurt it in some other way? Maybe it was already hurt before she fell? Maybe once she had fallen down, something else happened that caused her to hurt her knee? This idea can be expanded, if we follow the statement with 'The girl fell down and hurt her knee. *The ground was covered with broken glass*.' We now have a different version of events: we now (taking all the events into consideration) assume that the girl not only fell down and hurt her knee, but that she hurt it *on the glass*.

Livo and Rietz (1986) discuss narrative structure as ordering, organising, interrelating and lending internal coherence to groups of ideas. As a definition, this has a remarkable similarity to the notion of narrative as a form of meaning-making which depends on internal logic.

Polkinghorne (1988, p.18) defines narrative as 'a meaning structure that organises events and human actions into a whole, thereby attributing significance to individual actions and events according to their effect on the whole'. He notes that narrative 'recognises the meaningfulness of individual experiences by noting how they function as parts in a whole' (*ibid.,* p36). This echoes Holloway's (1979) insistence that the wholeness

of the narrative is what gives it its significance. Polkinghorne, however, uses the terms ‘story’ and ‘narrative’ as equivalents, and he does not attempt to differentiate between the two.

Bruner (1990) emphasises the sequential nature of narrative discourse, while at the same time noting that the over all intention of the narrative has to be somehow extracted from this simple sequence. That is to say, the sequence of events must be interpreted in relation to the *sense* of the narrative. Bruner (*ibid*.) notes particularly that narrative is about making links between pieces of information, the links themselves (which may be unstated) forming an essential part of the narrative. Narrative is in, fact, ‘joined up thinking’.

Denning (2005), like Holloway, talks about narrative as being concerned with interactions, while Butcher (2006) takes this a stage further, maintaining that narrative has a capacity to express experience in *meaningful* ways. Rosen (1986) picks up this notion of meaningfulness, and discusses the importance of ‘plot’ in narrative, and this is a key feature of narrative as a form – there is an implicit intention, or force (or story?), within the narrative structure. Narratives have *meaning*. They are not simply disconnected lists or phrases or sentences. In defining narrative as ‘the representation of an event or a series of events’ Abbott (2008, p.13) explicitly states that the key to narrative is the event: something must happen, or else the statement is not a narrative. This reinforces Rosen’s notion of plot, or force, and Holloway’s (1979, p.5) description of narrative as ‘events which happen’. Abbott notes that a statement without direction or action has no sense of inner continuity and may be little more than a

description (his example is ‘My dog has fleas’ (p.13)), or an instruction, ‘Stop at the light’. He goes on to state that some writers on the subject would insist on there being more than one event, or that a series of events should have a causal relationship before being considered as a narrative.

However, at its most simple, it would seem that even one statement representing an event could be accepted as a narrative (Abbott offers the example ‘My dog was bitten by a flea’ (p.13) as a narrative statement with which to compare the descriptive statement above). Abbott further opines that narratives are not only events which happen but they are events which happen in time. Therefore, a discourse which has no internal time-structure (as, for example, an essay) is not, according to Abbott’s definition, a narrative. He maintains that to qualify as narrative, the events described must move though time (although he does point out that the form allows for the chronology of events to move backwards as well as forwards through time, or even to switch between the two).

Herman’s (2009) definition of narrative states that narrative cues us to ‘draw inferences about a structured time-course of particularized events’ (p.92), and this definition is confirmed by Ochs and Capps (2001). Herman draws attention to a further problematic feature in the discussion on narrative: that of *description*. He notes that while the overlap between narrative and description may be substantial, and while they may feature similar textual structures, the absence of a time-course makes description a separate form. In description, nothing happens – it simply *is*. Herman is supported in his thinking on description by Pflugmacher (2005), who

identifies it as a separate form, and his definition of description as a non-narrative structure would match that presented by Abbott (*ibid.* above).

Thus far, then, a definition of narrative might include the following conditions:

- It is a representation of an event or series of events (that is, the means of discourse)
- If a series of events, these are inter-related
- These events happen over time
- These events have meaning
- The meaning is constructed through interpreting all of the known events as a whole.

Fisher (1984) refers to humankind as '*homo narrans*' and proposes that all forms of human communication are narrations. The very terms 'narrative' and 'narration' derive from the Latin root '*narro*' – I tell.
A narrative is, quite literally, the telling of something. Fisher identifies a 'Narrative Paradigm' composed of three main parts:

- Narrative fidelity
- Internal coherence
- Good reasons

These correspond to the previous conditions insofar that 'narrative fidelity' is concerned with accurate representation of an event or series of events; 'internal coherence' refers to the interrelationships within the narrative; and 'good reasons' refers to the meaningfulness of the events described. Fisher's narrative paradigm does not include reference to

time, or to the wholeness of the interpretation of the narrative. Caldiero (2007), writing about Fisher's paradigm, interprets the inclusion in a narrative of the three tenets of Fisher's paradigm as being that which give it resonance, or believability for the reader.

Applebee (1978) notes as a definition of narrative that it is based on a chain of events, each one developing from the preceding one, while at the same time elaborating and moving forward. He also notes that a narrative has a theme or a framework: that which Abbott (2008), for example, might refer to as the 'story', or Rosen (1986) might call 'plot'.

There is a further difficulty with the terminology above, and that is the tendency for some writers to use the words 'story' and 'narrative' interchangeably. Bruner (2002, p.22) very clearly differentiates between the two when he comments, 'Are stories real or imagined?'. Stories are by their very nature nebulous, ephemeral. They exist in the world of ideas, and become narratives in the relating (whether in words, music, pictures, or some other form).

Abbott (2008) discusses the problem English speakers have in clearly separating the two terms, noting that in many instances, when someone refers to having heard 'a story', they are not usually separating the 'story-idea' (or to borrow from computer terminology, the 'soft' story) itself from the telling of it, or the 'story-form' ('hard' story). Narratologist theory examines the story (idea)/discourse (means of telling) distinction, and many earlier writers have wrestled with definitions, *inter alia* Bruner (1986).

It is evident however, that most people understand the difference between the two: a familiar ‘soft’ story such as that of *Cinderella* is recognised even when presented in different words, with added or embellished episodes. In cases such as this, even when the ‘hard’ story is different, the ‘soft’ story remains. It is further possible to identify the same ‘soft’ story where the means of conveyance (discourse) is altered: we recognise the ‘soft’ story of *Cinderella* when represented in dance or in picture form as well as in words.

2.2.6 Summation of section.

This section has examined what is meant when we refer to a ‘story’, and it has identified two aspects of story: the ‘soft’ story (which is abstract) and the ‘hard’ story’ (which is soft story + means of discourse). It has differentiated between a story grammar (the structure), and a story schema (what a story ‘is’). It has also noted two categories of story, the deep- and the broad-form story, and offered a brief description of these along with examples of classroom applications of the latter form.

It has further defined ‘narrative’ as the representation of a series of meaningful and interrelated events which take place over time and which are interpreted as a whole. Two models have been proposed which illustrate this concept.

2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF STORY

In this section a rationale is offered for the use of story as a learning medium, and its origins and development are briefly examined.

2.3.1 Story and learning

Stories and storytelling have been around for a very long time. They have been used as a way of passing on knowledge, of explaining scientific phenomena, of promoting group cohesion, transferring cultural norms, of entertaining, nurturing, and comforting. Bettelheim (1975, p.5), writing about a particular type of story, the traditional fairy tale , quotes the poet Schiller as saying 'Deeper meaning resides in the fairy tales told to me in my childhood than in the truth that is taught by life'. Fairy tales, according to Bettelheim, 'confront the child squarely with the basic human predicaments' (*ibid.*, p.8), thus providing a satisfying and real context through which to explore and begin to understand the human condition.

Collins and Cooper point out that :

> *… storytelling is among the oldest forms of communication. It exists in every culture. Storytelling is the commonality of all human beings, in all places, in all times. It is used to educate, to inspire, to record historical events, to entertain, to transmit cultural mores.*
>
> (1997, p.1)

Fisher (1984) maintains that all communication forms are narrative in that they represent events and that we communicate in order to tell stories, or report on events. In developing his 'narrative paradigm', Fisher's discussion is based on factual rather than imaginative narratives,

but the paradigm applies equally well to imaginative storytelling as to factual. Fisher's description of the 'narrative paradigm' is based on lived experience, and this would at first seem to contradict Schiller's comment (above). However, if stories (or more specifically, fairy tales) do in fact deal with 'basic human predicaments' as asserted by Bettelheim, then perhaps Schiller's comment has more resonance when interpreted as meaning that a fairy tale can contain the distilled experiences of many, rather than that which can be learned in one lifetime.

Some writers, von Franz (1970) among them, refer to the psychic associations in story, and she makes links with both Freudian and Jungian psychology in discussing the merits of storytelling in general and traditional storytelling in particular.

Roe, Alfred and Smith (1998) offer many reasons for the importance of story, citing the historical transmission of information in eras predating universal literacy, the passing on of customs and rituals, the sharing of messages (including religious messages) and instructions, as well as stories told strictly for entertainment purposes.

Lauritzen and Jaeger (1997) remind us of the fundamental nature of storytelling. They offer the following as justifications for the continued prevalence of the story form: we use story, they maintain, to remember, to parallel life, to make meaning, to learn in a meaningful context, to accommodate individual differences, and to join a community.

Roe *et al*. (1998) maintain that the importance of story is due to its ability to make connections between people, and to invest the dry facts of history, geography and the like with a human element which can help to

make abstractions concrete and accessible. This notion is echoed by Bruner's (1990) assertion that story provides a way of framing knowledge, thereby constructing an accessible reality which might otherwise remain 'lost in a murk of chaotic experience' (Bruner, 1990, p.56).

Egan (1986) describes the way that story assists even young children in developing, for example, a sense of causality, at a stage in their cognitive development which would be regarded by Piagetian theory as premature. Given that modern thinking does not necessarily accept Piagetian theory unconditionally (Donaldson, 1978), this appears to be a limited endorsement of the power of story to advance (or at the very least support) cognitive development.

Thus far the recommendations for the use of story have been in the realm of knowledge and understanding. Collins and Cooper (1997) add to this list some skills which are highly significant in educational terms, and cannot be overlooked if story is to be recommended as a learning medium. They note that story and storytelling enhances appreciation of the beauty of language, it increases vocabulary, refines speaking, listening and writing skills, encourages an interest in books and reading, and extends and develops thinking skills through discussion and consideration of circumstances and events in an objective rather than a subjective manner. Livo and Rietz (1986) also note that in its oral form, story promotes an appreciation of the nuances of oral language as distinct from writing.

In addition to story's power to frame external knowledge, it helps us to understand *ourselves* (Boyd, 2009). It provides opportunities for us to

explore the human condition from perspectives other than our own – to step outside of ourselves and to think and reflect on human behaviour without the restrictions of the here and now. Heywood (1998) notes that in addition to its place as a credible source of instruction aligned to education (and to literature), which is the focus of this study, story has also developed in other directions. Story is used as a therapeutic tool in psychoanalysis, spirituality, healing and medical contexts. Heywood points to its place in 'alternative' culture (which he describes as being counter-cultures outside established religion, political and moral trajectories); it is represented in professional theatre; in professional storytelling for entertainment purposes and in folk-art. To this list might be added the current vogue for computer-based and trans-media story, which is discussed below.

2.3.2 History of story

Storytelling has a long history. Ransome (1909, p.6) reminds us that 'in the beginning story-telling was not an affair of pen and ink'. He goes on to describe the ways that pre-literate societies embedded folk-knowledge in story. In this way, not only would the listener be enticed to pay attention to the information, but the likelihood of the information being retained would be increased due to engagement in the story process. Stories were also a way in which early people could record their history, passing down information from generation to generation by word of mouth. According to Ransome, the earliest stories were grand in scale and proportion, reflecting the struggle of mankind to survive. These stories, he maintains, told of deities and supernatural forces, and we find them in the

myths and legends of all nations – the Nordic sagas, the Arthurian legends, the myths of Ancient Greece and Rome, the folklore of the Celtic gods and goddesses. With the written word, stories became more humble, and more closely connected to the lives of the ordinary man. It is almost as though Ransome is suggesting that the acts of writing and wrighting combining to create a concrete entity in place of the abstract notion somehow debased the story concept. Ransome theorises that from the introduction of the written word, the gods of mythology were diminished in story, while at the same time, the ordinary man was elevated – this leading to a merging of the two. There are many examples of this scattered throughout history: the human rather than the celestial element became the driving force behind stories of *heroes* rather than *gods*.

If we look to classical mythology, we can even follow this line of gradual development through an intermediate period where stories concern god-heroes who are of neither one realm nor the other: in Greek myth, Zeus was born of gods Cronus and Rhea. As the storyline develops over time, some accounts have it that Zeus has a child – among many others – of Leda, a mortal: thus bringing the story 'down to earth'. Celtic mythology follows the same pattern: the half-man, half-god Cuchulain is born of the god Lugh and a mortal mother, the daughter of the king of Ulster. This is a pattern repeated in stories and myths from many cultures across the world.

Other writers have also theorised about the origins of storytelling. Pellowski (1977) offers the following series of propositions:

1. *That it grew out of the playful, self-entertainment needs of humans.*

2. That it satisfied the need to explain the surrounding physical world.

3. That it came about because of an intrinsic religious need in humans to honour or propitiate the supernatural force(s) believed to be present in the world.

4. That it evolved from the human need to communicate experience to other humans.

5. That it fulfilled an aesthetic need for beauty, regularity, and form through expressive language and music.

6. That it stemmed from the desire to record the actions or qualities of one's ancestors, in the hope that this would give them a kind of immortality.

Pellowski (1977, p.10)

If Pellowski's series of propositions is hierarchical (and she does not categorise it as such, although her use of a numbered list does tend to lead the reader to interpret it that way), then her understanding of the purpose of story-telling in its earliest form is both more mundane (relating to the need for self-entertainment) while at the same time more expressive-aesthetic (in terms of its relationship to an abstract domain of the imagination) than that of Ransome, whose 'epic struggle' definition appears to exist in order to justify or endorse human actions. However, her third proposition does begin to match Ransome's. Interestingly, while Pellowski twice notes the meeting of an expressive-aesthetic need as a basis for storytelling, Ransome does not begin to note this until the introduction of 'bardic' storytelling.

Pellowski traces the development of storytelling from its earliest origins, through ‘bardic’ storytelling, which she interprets (and Ransome’s definition endorses this) as storytelling through performance of ‘poetic oral narrations that chronicle events of a tribal, cultural or national group’ (Pellowski, 1977, p.19). She further notes that these performances were often, but not always, accompanied by music. Pellowski links bardic storytelling with religious storytelling, both of which she maintains have the same intent in that they have both been developed to honour and promote heroes. Roe *et al.* (1998) describe the development of this bardic form of storytelling in its earliest form as resulting in the elevation of the teller to the extent that he often became a revered member of the tribe or village – the keeper of the group’s history, rules, religion and beliefs. In later history, the bard or storyteller carried stories from one group to another, or from one country to another. Hartley (2009) revisits the notion of bardic function in his discussion on the place of storytelling in TV and digital media. He maintains that these contemporary popular media serve the same function as the traditional ‘bard’ and argues that they have come to be viewed in a similar way.

Pellowski’s history then moves through folk storytelling (told for example in the home, or round the camp-fire), theatrical storytelling, and institutional storytelling, although she does not suggest that these follow on one from the other, but are rather many branches from one tree, each developing concurrently. An interesting branch of this history is that of storytelling in schools, which Pellowski notes only became acceptable in the United States education system in 1876 as a result of the work of the

Ethical Culture Society – this despite later support of the educational value of the medium by Early Years' educators such as Friederich Froebel, Maria Montessori, John Dewey and others. Pellowski's history maintains that storytelling as an educational medium, in the United States at least, was promoted by library administrators before formal school systems acknowledged its worth.

Kearney (2002) discusses the origin of story as forming two main branches: the historical and the fictional. The first endorses the 'knowledge and understanding' assertion offered by *inter alia* Roe, Alfred and Smith (1998). According to Kearney, story was first used to explain the inexplicable (the so-called 'founding myths'), and then developed as a way of recording and transmitting empirical events. Kearney does not at this stage ascribe any expressive-aesthetic quality to story, and his interpretation of the development of story is in this respect similar to that of Ransome (1909). Like Ransome, Kearney goes on to discuss a fictional branch in the development of story, and this is where ideas of beauty, expression and drama came to influence the narrative. Once this fictional branch of story became established, it was no longer enough that a story should be memorable, but it should also meet some standard of aestheticism. Fictional narratives take account of the culture in which they are produced in respect of shape and style (the Celtic 'heroic' ending versus modern 'happy ever after' story conclusions). Kearney's discussion goes on to address the possibility (which he ultimately dismisses) that modern technological approaches to story production and reproduction (in film, on TV, and through computer technology) will through fragmentation

of the story structure eventually lead to the demise of story itself. This, of course, is entirely dependent on an unchanging understanding of what story is.

If the notion of story can alter over time (and we have seen that it has: starting with myth, moving on to history, and then becoming an expressive-aesthetic form), then there is no reason to suppose that it cannot continue to embrace new formats and evolve through these. In this way a story can unfold through a series of, for example, television dialogues, through blog entries or even 'tweets' and text-messages in the same way as a serialised story in a newspaper or magazine. In some of these instances there may be no conclusion, and so we may eventually need to alter our story definition to accommodate a modern 'take' on our understanding of what story is. This is happening already. Storify (2012) is an online application that 'curates' tweets, allowing them to be presented along with a linking narrative which then forms a story. The field of computer game theory is split between 'narratologists' who argue that computer games are a form of storytelling, and 'ludologists', who view computer games as a separate phenomenon. Aarseth (2004) suggests a new name: 'interactive narratives' (p.46).

Løvlie (2005), expanding on the notion of interactivity, maintains that computer games are an innovative mixture informed by narrative theory as well as game-specific theory. How innovative is moot however, as Løvlie himself goes on to compare the interactive storytelling nature of computer games with improvisational theatre, which has been around for a very long time. Jenkins (2003) talks about 'transmedia' storytelling, in

which he explains that the same story might be explored through video, film or television, various text-based sources and then further developed in the world of computer games. An example of this is evident in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* story, which began as a *Disney* theme-park ride. This adventure ride inspired a series of movies, and has been adapted into a variety of video games for PC, consoles, mobile phones and as an online game. Many books – novels, picture books, and activity books (colouring books, sticker books and puzzle books, for example) have been published using the characters and ideas from the story, and toys and board games have also been produced which allow the story to be explored in a variety of ways.

Hartley (2009) attempts to place in the tradition of bardic function the self-made and personally published stories evident in digital storytelling (*YouTube*, blogs, tweets, *Facebook* dialogues and so on). He argues that television, being a broadcast medium, has a 'top-down' approach to storytelling which is being usurped by the new, democratic media. These interactive media are leading to the establishment of a new 'folk' literature, one with many storytellers. However, as Hartley (2009, p.25) says:

> *The challenge is to find a way to think about, to explain, and to promote mass participation without …an incomprehensible cacophonous plurality of competing voices … The challenge is also … how not to associate 'more' with 'worse' ; mass participation with loss of quality?*

This section has thus far discussed historical, fictional, and expressive-aesthetic story forms. Story, however, has another role. As a general educational strategy, use of story is well-established (Abma, 2003), and this is further discussed in section 2.6.1 (p.82) Professional use of story is also evident in higher education (McDrury and Alterio, 2003; Moon, 2010), for example, in teacher education, in the education of health-related professionals, in organisations as a management training tool (Boje, 2001; Gabriel, 2000), and as a therapeutic or reflective tool (Haigh and Hardy, 2011; Josefsson, 2010). Story can also provide a means of transmitting messages from client to professional using a 'bottom up' model as well as a 'top down' one, and medical practitioners, for example, are encouraged to engage with patients' personal narratives in order to enhance their understanding of clinical conditions (Davenport, 2011). This in addition to using analogous story forms as a tool for transmitting medical information, much in the same way as in formal educational settings.

2.3.3 Summation of section.

This section discusses the deep level of learning which story promotes, and links the notion of storytelling with a narrative paradigm which underpins all forms of communication. It maintains that the story form is uniquely placed to help learners make connections and to give concrete form to abstract notions. Story has the further advantage of promoting an appreciation of the expressive and aesthetic qualities of language.

The origins of story are discussed, and the development of story from an expositionary to an expressive form is noted and reference is made to professional use of story as an organisational tool.

There is a call for a review of our traditional understanding of story structures arising from the ways in which new technologies have embraced the story form.

2.4 NARRATIVE UNDERSTANDING AND MEANING-MAKING

We understand stories in a particular kind of way. Although stories are very often a series of events, with a beginning, middle and end, they are more than that, as discussed in section 2.1 (p.24). Some theorists have examined the way stories are processed, and drawn conclusions about the cognitive structures which support the understanding of story. This section explores some of these conclusions.

2.4.1 Modes of thinking

Mink (1965) discusses three modes of cognitive processing: theoretical, 'categoreal', and configurational. Theoretical processing, he maintains, applies to the logical and mathematical domain, whereby we can make inferences based on the holistic understanding of a series of mathematical events. Mink sees categoreal processing as the employing of previous experience in determining and organising concepts, bringing together like with like. Configurational processing is described as the understanding of elements/events as parts of a whole.

Mink was concerned with examining the difference between a 'narrative' understanding, and a 'scientific' understanding: between a

'knowing' and an 'explaining'. Jean Mandler (1983, 1984) outlines four modes of understanding: the 'categorical' or 'taxonomic', the 'matrix', the 'serial' and the 'schematic'. Mandler's categorical mode is similar in definition to Mink's categoreal mode. Her definition of matrix understanding is related to the categorical, but rather than being serial in structure, is characterised by class intersection, and is concerned with overlapping features. Thus matrix understanding may be regarded as the intersection of independent sets of knowledge about the same thing. The example offered by Polkinghorne (1988) is where knowledge about lions or tigers is derived not only from serial classification in the set of felines, but also from their membership of a separate set of 'ferocious animals'. Mandler's definition of serial knowledge applies to items which are understood in terms of their connection to one another in a unilateral direction – as, for example, the letters of the alphabet.

The fourth and final mode of understanding discussed by Mandler is 'schematic'. In this mode, knowledge is organised in respect of its relation to a 'whole', and each new piece of information gathered in respect of an individual item reforms the holistic understanding. This operates in the same way that each new episode in a story might affect the holistic understanding of 'the story so far'.

The work of Jerome Bruner (1996) simplifies these notions and he describes two basic modes of cognitive processing: the 'paradigmatic' and the 'narrative'. The paradigmatic mode is concerned with describing and explaining, and is used as an approach for making formal connections between ideas in a 'logical' and verifiable way: similar to Mink's

‘theoretical’ mode, and is defined by Gerrig (1994) as logical and deductive. The narrative mode however, seeks to explain that which is not explicit, and to do so by relating events and sequences of events to previous experiences. It is concerned with understanding how a sequence of events can be organised into a whole ‘story’, the significance of which may be deeper than the sum of the individual components, by way of drawing parallels with other, similar sequences. Bruner’s narrative mode, like Mandler’s ‘schematic’ understanding, would seem to represent a synthesis of Mink’s categoreal and configurational processing, and the terminology itself offers a descriptive name for the model, given that in understanding a piece of narrative, both categoreal and configurational methods are employed.

This method of organising knowledge is particularly important as it is the way people instinctively organise knowledge and it allows formal connections to be made before one is able to prove them in any formal way (Bruner, 1996). Indeed, this schematic or narrative understanding in many instances precedes the paradigmatic – a scientist will form a schematic thesis before going on to test it in a paradigmatic way (Bauermeister and Newman, 1994).

Bolivar (2002) describes these two modes of thinking as ‘paradigmatic’ and ‘sintagmatic’, and he shows the differences between the two in the following table:

Table 8. Two forms of scientific knowledge in the study of human action

	Paradigmatic (Logical-scientific)	**Narrative (sintagmatic) (Literary-historical)**
Characters	'*Scientific' study* of human behaviour. propositional	*Popular Lore (folklore),* constructed in biographic-narrative mode
Methods of verification	*Argument:* proceedings and methods established by the positivist position.	*Story:* hermeneutics, interpretation, narratives, etc.
Discourses/ speeches	*Discourse of investigation:* set objectives, no evaluation, abstract.	*Discourse of practics:* expressed in intentions, desires, actions, personal histories.
Types of knowledge	*Formal* knowledge, explicative by cause-effect, certainty, predictable	*Practical* knowledge, which represents intentions and meanings, plausible, non-transferable
Forms	*Propositional:* categories, rules, principles. The voice of the researcher disappears	*Narrative:* particular and temporal, metaphors, images. Voice of actors and researcher are represented/ heard.

(from Bolivar, 2002, p. 8)

Bolivar maintains that the two modes of thinking outlined above are complementary, and that each has its own function. As such, they are each legitimate when verified in their own terms and contribute to a richness in the way we make sense of the world. He notes that as different approaches to understanding, each can enhance the other. The decontextualisation of knowledge as represented by paradigmatic approaches to thinking allows the 'uniqueness and diversity of each experience' (*ibid.*p.10) to be examined and categorised, whereas a narrative/sintagmatic approach offers a holistic interpretation of a series of experiences to be arrived at by means of collation and unification.

2.4.2 Narrative understanding and learning

Research is recognising that, far from being only a means of entertainment, as one of the central conceptual structures of human thought (Genereux and McKeough, 2007), narrative has been used, in the form of stories, as a way of passing on information for many years.

Genereux and McKeough (*ibid*.) looked at a sample of schoolchildren between the ages of 10 and 17 in order to try to understand how narrative thought develops during adolescence, particularly in terms of the structure and content of narrative interpretations. Their sample consisted of 151 school pupils, and included average and higher -than - average pupils.

Genereux and McKeough noted that by the age of about 8 years of age, children had typically mastered the basic story structure (described in 2.2.1, p.29). They also noted that as children's cognitive development moves from the concrete to more generalised, abstract thought, they become increasingly able to synthesise meaning.

In addition to examining understanding of story structure, Genereux and McKeough go on to discuss the development of understanding of narrative content. They comment on a shift from knowledge about actions and events in early childhood, through understanding of intent, and finally interpretative understanding which they note begins to form around 12 years of age onward. Their study provides evidence of changes in narrative thought which suggest that during late childhood and early adolescence there is an increased capacity towards dealing with narratives involving multiple dimensions, a shift in narrative understanding

from intentional to interpretive, and an increase in the volume of response to narrative tasks.

Lyle (2000) also argues the case for considering narrative understanding as a key aspect of meaning-making. She contends that children are naturally predisposed to think in narrative forms based on everyday contexts, and that when learning is decontextualised, the task becomes even more difficult. A number of sources from discursive psychology in addition to Bruner (1990, 1996) support the principle of narrative understanding as a major meaning-making strategy: *inter alia* Harré and Stearns (1995). Rosen (1986) believes that educators should seek to promote opportunities for narrative practice in all classroom activities, and postulates that were this to happen learning possibilities would be enhanced. Lyle insists that as narrative understanding is so central to meaning-making its application to classroom practice must be extended and exploited. She, along with Egan (1986), emphasises the centrality of the story form as a way of making sense of the world. Egan's (*ibid.)* work, however, highlights the lack of research into the affective connection between story narratives and meaning-making. Affective learning outcomes involve attitudes, motivation, and values (Smith and Ragan, 1999). Gottschall (2012) comments that 'story is constantly nibbling and kneading us, shaping our minds without our knowledge or consent.' (p.148)

The work of Richardson (2003), who has led developments in multicultural and antiracist education, acknowledges the importance of story and its impact on the affective domain, and this is confirmed by

Connolly (2009), who, working in Belfast with the Peace Initiatives Institute (Pii) and the Media Initiative for Children (MIC) demonstrates quite clearly that it is possible, given the right media, to use a narrative approach to have an impact on the affective domain. Connolly used a media-based intervention (in the form of short television cartoons) and found that children taking part in the project showed increased awareness of anti-social (non-inclusive) attitudes as measured against two of the three objectives stated at the outset compared with a control group. Over all the results were generally positive, and this general awareness was further confirmed in interviews with the children's teachers.

Lyle's (2000) main conclusion is that narrative understanding is the primary mode of understanding. She asserts that educators neglect it to their cost, and holds that as a meaning-making tool, narrative discourse can be applied to any content in order to shape it in a way that will make it more accessible to the learner. She maintains that it should be 'the starting point for planning and organising the curriculum and classroom processes' (Lyle, 2000). Connolly's (2009) work certainly seems to indicate that a narrative approach can impact on the affective domain, informing both attitudes and behaviour. Importantly, a narrative approach is a natural, familiar and accessible way of working in Early Years' education.

Constructivist theory (Bruner, 1966) as an approach to teaching and learning is based on the proposition that learning is the result of mental construction (that is, knowledge is not received from outside, but is constructed by fitting new information together with what is already

known). That being so, one of the tasks of the teacher is to translate information to be learned into a format that articulates with the learner's current state of understanding: by providing points of reference that are familiar to the learner, story allows the teacher to do just that.

2.4.3. Summation of section

This section explores the notion that there are distinct ways of organising knowledge – different modes of thinking. Some definitions of these are examined, and there is a focus on the simplified definition offered by Bruner (1996) of 'paradigmatic' and 'narrative' as being the two main ways in which cognitive processing occurs. These two modes correspond to a 'scientific' and fact-based way of understanding (paradigmatic) and a holistic approach to the organisation of knowledge (narrative understanding). A case is made for the exploitation of this narrative approach based on the assertion that it is one of the central conceptual structures of human thought.

2.5 STORY, METAPHOR, ANALOGY AND LEARNING

This section will look at metaphor and analogy, discuss how these are present in stories, and how they might be used to support cognitive processes. It will also look at the extent to which young children's thinking is able to access metaphor and analogy as a tool for learning, and how teachers can help to promote metaphorical and analogical thinking.

As noted by Gottschall (2012), story promotes both cognitive (knowledge and understanding) and affective (behaviour) outcomes: stories set in different historical periods are told to 'inform' the study of

people in the past; fables and morality tales are told to ‘inform’ mores and social attitudes; tales of dark events are told to ‘warn’ children of the dangers of careless behaviour. It is sometimes taken for granted that the messages embedded in the stories we tell are decoded as intended by the children we tell them to. Is this in fact the case, and if so, how effective is story as a methodology for passing on such information?

2.5.1 Metaphor and analogy

Metaphorical/analogical thinking is defined by Levin and Allen (1976) as ‘transmutive’ (p.140). They explain that this requires ‘transfer between two concepts’ (*ibid*.) – that is to say, the subject has to be able to understand the second concept in terms of the first (the metaphor), and has to recognise the terms of the similarity. As an example, a simple metaphor might maintain that as I type, my fingers fly across the keyboard. In order to understand this statement, the reader must recognise that the term of similarity is speed (rather than, say, feathers).

Goswami (1992) describes analogy in classical terms, with an Aristotelian definition involving relationships between at least four terms – the relation between the first two being equivalent to that between the second two (that is, A is to B as C is to D). In order to be able to reason in this way, a subject must, however, be able to discern the relationship between A and B in order to complete the analogy. In each case, that of metaphor and analogy, the subject has to appreciate the base concept in order to make the transfer in understanding.

Analogy may be further described as expanded metaphor – in order to understand metaphor, the reader/listener has to be able to make a link

between the subject of the metaphor and the analogue, or comparison, in terms of the relationship between the two. In this way, metaphor is understood by a process of analogous thinking.

Metaphor and analogy are present in stories as part of the process by which one thing is represented as something else for the purpose of giving more force and meaning than can be produced in a simple literal way. They are also a means of engaging the reader/listener by producing narrative which is creative, aesthetically pleasing and which stimulates the imagination. As an example, the 'big bad wolf' in the Red Riding Hood story may be understood as a metaphor for a 'dangerous stranger'. Red Riding Hood herself can be understood as a metaphor for childhood innocence. Of course, the understanding derived from each of these metaphors is dependent on how the reader/listener processes the analogy: if the reader understands the wolf to represent 'animals' rather than 'strangers', then the understanding reached will be that little girls should stay away from all animals (in case they are eaten up). Red Riding Hood herself might be read as a metaphor for a provocatively dressed girl (the red cloak signifying exhibitionism) and therefore the understanding drawn from this could be that girls should not draw attention to themselves in their clothing or else they will attract unwanted attention. Neither of these conclusions is necessarily 'wrong', they are simply different from the first ones offered.

2.5.2 Supporting the analogue

Bjorklund (2005) points out that analogical reasoning enables a learner to understand something that he does not already know by a

process of mapping between one element and another. The learner will use knowledge about a base element to reach a conclusion about an unknown element. It is important, therefore, that the element on which the analogy is based is known to the learner.

Goswami (1992) disagrees with Piaget (1977) who claimed that analogical reasoning does not truly emerge in children until age 11-12, pointing to studies which suggest that even very young children can understand and use analogy. However she emphasises that this can only be the case if *they understand the terms on which the analogy is based* [my italics]. This is a key point if teachers are to use analogous stories to teach towards cognitive (or cognitive-affective) goals: the teacher must select a base for the analogy that is relevant and recognisable to the learners, and it must also become one of the functions of the teacher to act as an intermediary between the base of the analogy and the desired analogue in order for the learner to achieve the intended goal. Davidson (1976), referring to his own earlier work, writes about higher mental processes including verbal and pictorial analogy, and verbal-symbolic and visual imagery metaphor as processes of 'hypostatization', which he defines as 'cognitive transformation processes that may be called into play when the learner is faced with complex or abstract learning tasks' (Davidson, in Levin and Allen, 1976, p.135). He goes on to define hypostatization as 'cognitive activity that is metaphorical-analogical in character', and warns that this can result in unfortunate cognitive distortions if the terms of the similarity between base element and analogue are not fully understood. This can lead the learner to erroneous

conclusions – for example, the notion suggested above that girls should not wear bright clothing is a distortion of the intended metaphor, but one which could be avoided with appropriate teacher intervention. This must serve as a reminder to teachers using the process that it is part of the teaching task when using analogous stories to explore and explain the terms of the analogy. This is an important point when we consider that metaphorical/analogical processes are essentially constructivist in nature – that is to say they are active processes in which the learner constructs meaning according to his prior knowledge and experience. Unless the learner has some knowledge of the base of the metaphor or analogy, the cognitive link will not be made. As each learner brings his own set of prior knowledge and experiences to any learning situation, and metaphor/analogy, like any other cognitive process, has to be interpreted in the light of this, there is always a possibility that the cognitive outcome will not be the one that was intended.

Goswami (1992) maintains that although young children can use analogies, these are often based on perceptual rather than relational similarity (how objects look rather than what they represent), and that a 'relational shift' (*ibid*., p.91) takes place between the ages of 6 and 9, with older children and adults able to make use of information other than mere appearance to complete the link between base and analogue. This would strengthen the argument for teacher intervention in order to scaffold young children's thinking in order to help them to make the necessary relational shift, until such time as they are able to do this unaided.

I have discussed the nature of metaphor and analogy, noted their presence in stories, and research has shown that, contrary to Piaget's assertion, young children can and do use metaphor. This does not explain why. Young children use metaphor to help them to move from the known to the unknown (Bjorklund, 2005). In the sense that all forms of communication are part of the search for understanding, metaphor can be seen as an attempt to 'point towards that which is perceived by the intellect or senses but which transcends straightforward description' (Ashton, 1994, p.358). It can also be seen as a 'shorthand' method of communicating ideas where those involved in the communication have a shared set of prior knowledge and experience evidenced in the base of the analogy. Further, metaphor provides a creative/expressive use of language which appeals to the aesthetic sensibility, and may in this way engage and/or entertain. Based on both her own observations of primary schoolchildren, Ashton (*ibid.)* believes that metaphoric use of language is evident in children from a young age who exhibit a love of the 'playfulness' in language through early childhood jokes and riddles. Here duality in interpretation directs the child to seek meaning by experimenting with word-play, and this, she maintains, is an early stage in learning to interpret metaphors. The child has to search for common elements in the joke or the riddle, in order to provide the answer – much in the same way that common elements have to be discerned in both the base and the analogue of a metaphor. She gives the following example:

Q- Why did the milkmaid blush?

A- Because the rose said 'forget-me-not'.

Ashton (1994, p.362)

She explains that to understand the riddle the child has to have certain knowledge of flowers in order to appreciate the joke on two levels, and that he also has to make comparisons between the subjects of the riddle. This, she says, is a first step towards understanding metaphor, and can be seen as a way of 'practising' and experimenting with creative and expressive uses of language in a way which will facilitate later, more complex means of communication.

2.5.3 The role of the teacher

Metaphor is creative, it is entertaining, it is expressive, it is active, it is engaging – and children can and do use it and enjoy it. Metaphorical and analogous stories harness all of these positive aspects, and therefore meet the teacher's need to engage the learner in order to meet curricular objectives. However, the teacher has to be certain that the base of the analogy is understood if she wishes to be sure of reaching a particular cognitive goal.

Whether or not analogous stories can impact on affective learning is quite a different matter. Teachers can support children's 'knowing' in a variety of ways, and mediating in analogous thinking is one of these.

However, 'knowing' and 'doing' are different. Bjorklund (2005, p.369) notes that in order for learning to have an effect on behaviour, 'after children have attended to a model and formed a mental representation of behaviour, they must convert that representation to action.'

Milligan's (1980) philosophical discussion on the conversion of ideas to action notes that in order to understand how this conversion takes

place, we not only need to take account of the reasoning behind an action, but also other factors which may affect the response, including the range of alternatives which are available. Actions are not the simple result of reason, and it is therefore insufficient to simply provide reasons, however appropriate, if we are to effect behaviour change. Given that many of the affective outcomes sought by teachers are personal or social in intent, a useful model for understanding how this kind of information is processed might be that of Kenneth Dodge (Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey and Brown, 1986). This model is described by Bjorklund (2005, pp. 374-375) as consisting of five steps of information processing which are necessary for knowledge to be transformed into competent social functioning: encoding, interpretation, response search, response evaluation and enactment.

1. Encoding – The message must be received and accepted.
2. Interpretation – The message must be interpreted.
3. Response search – The learner must decide what to do, and at this stage will generate a variety of possible alternatives.
4. Response evaluation – the learner will weigh up the alternatives and make a selection from these.
5. Enactment – The learner will act out the chosen response.

Although the teacher can certainly influence stages 1 and 2 in this series by clear delivery of a given message, and by supporting interpretation of the message, stages 3 and 4 will be affected by influences outwith the teacher's control.

As an example:

Stage 1: The teacher tells a story with a clear anti-litter message.

Stage 2: The teacher clarifies the ‘moral of the story’ and makes explicit the links between the actions of the characters and the actions of the learner(s).

Stage 3: The learner(s) generate a series of possible responses –

I will make sure I never drop litter in the classroom.

I will never drop litter in the playground.

I will not drop litter in the playground (unless the bin is full).

I will not drop litter in the playground, but only if I am playing near the bin (because I don’t want to disrupt my game to go and look for one).

I will look for a bin and only drop litter if I can’t find one (I don’t know what else to do).

I will put litter in my pocket and save it until I find a bin.

Everyone else is dropping their litter on the ground so I will do that too.

And so on …

Stage 4: The enactment of the response will not necessarily always be the same for any given cue: this will depend on the circumstances of the incident, for example , ‘My friends will think I am silly if I put my rubbish in my pocket so I’ll drop it on the ground’ OR ‘My teacher will be cross if I drop my litter on the ground so I’ll put it in my pocket’

It is important to note that these decisions are not always consciously made, and are even sometimes made on a stimulus-response

level (Skinner, 2005). This occurs where children have learned from experience that a given response to a particular set of circumstances is beneficial to them, and they then adopt this behaviour as standard, without further need for analysis (for example, a child who learns from experience that he receives praise for throwing litter in a bin may learn to do so habitually without recourse to considering other factors).

All of this can make the task of teaching towards behavioural-affective outcomes of limited or variable success. If teachers continue to attempt to do so (and the next section will summarise some teaching programmes which aim to do just this) then this suggests that they must feel this type of learning to be of such high value and/or feel assured of at least some measure of success so that the varied success rate of such lessons is acceptable to them.

2.5.4 Summation of section.

This section explains that in order to understand metaphor, the reader/listener has to be able to make a link between a subject and its analogue, or comparison, in terms of the relationship between the two. This process is described as analogous thinking. Stories use this process to be more impactful and meaningful than can be achieved by using language in a simple literal way. Metaphorical/analogous stories engage the reader/listener by being creative, aesthetically pleasing and by stimulating the imagination. Children can and do use metaphor, but the teacher's role in supporting the analogue is crucial if optimal learning is to be derived from its use.

2.6 STORY AND PEDAGOGY

Knowing how children learn helps to inform approaches to teaching. If teaching is pitched at a level appropriate to the developmental stage of the learners, learning is more likely to take place. The view of Piaget (1929) on the cognitive development of children suggests that children learn differently at different stages in their development (see Appendix 16, p.444). Piaget's work has subsequently been the subject of some criticism (for example, *inter alia* Vygotsky, 1978, below), but there is a degree of merit in his conclusions as having explanatory power, so long as the notion of the fixed nature of these stages is questioned. Piaget's theory maintains that children progress through four stages and that they do so in the same order: the sensorimotor (approximately from birth to age 2), the preoperational (age 2 to 6 or 7), the concrete operational (about age 6 or 7 to 11 or 12), and finally the formal operational period (from about 11 or 12 and into adulthood) (Siegler and Alibali, 2005).

Vygotsky (1978) rejects this concept of linear development, instead focusing on a culturally transmitted psychology. His view is that there exists in humans a means of 'active adaptation' in which any given situation and the learner's reaction to it are affected by active social processes. He maintains that human intervention will alter the so-called biologically universal stages of development proposed by Piaget (Vygotsky,1978).

Donaldson (1978) also criticizes Piaget's theory, on the grounds that it did not take account of the social and cultural meanings of the materials used in his tests, that is to say he did not attend sufficiently to

the way the child being tested understood i) the language used and ii) the context . Donaldson (*ibid.)* proposes that where children understand the context, the results of the test are positively affected. Donaldson notes that while children may progress through the four stages described by Piaget, and in the order suggested by him, they may do so at differing age levels. Indeed, it is entirely possible that a child operating within, for example, Piaget's preoperational stage in one area of development may be simultaneously operating within the concrete operational stage in a different area.

Egan's (1997) response to Piaget's stages also challenges both their immutability and discreteness, suggesting that they are only 'somewhat' distinctive. Egan submits that children typically move from one stage to another in response to different kinds of tasks, reinforcing Donaldson's proposal (above). Egan further submits that the notion that knowledge relating to abstract ideas should not be taught until the appropriate (Piagetian) 'stage' has been reached by the learner is a 'psychological fallacy' (Egan, 1983, p.12). He acknowledges the descriptive power of Piaget's theory, but it is his contention that ";it makes no sense to teach concepts which develop naturally; (*ibid.,* p.16). Egan's proposition is that it is the teacher's job to teach towards the development of the very abstract concepts that Piaget purports will occur naturally. More recently, Schulz (2009) noted that while it is the concern of psychology to be descriptive, for education it is to be *prescriptive*, and he is critical of Piaget's descriptive approach to cognitive development, maintaining that this only serves to constrain educational undertakings.

Although Piaget's theory recognises social influences as an outside factor impacting upon the individual development of the child, Vygotsky (1978) emphasises the social context in which the development takes place as being of central importance. Stories and storytelling can provide just that social context in which learning can more readily take place.

Constructivist theory, (*inter alia* Bruner, 1996) , involves the active construction of knowledge, and is a way of enabling the individual to understand his world by making links between new and prior knowledge. The constructivist approach is not a direct transmission approach to knowledge and skill acquisition (instruction), but rather emphasises the need for the learner to actively engage in the learning process by constructing his own outcomes in the light of experience. Where learners interpret stories at an individual level, they do so by bringing their own understanding to the story. Teachers can support this process by selecting stories that are appropriate to both the level of understanding of their pupils, and to their own learning goals.

2.6.1. General learning goals

Shirley (2005) and Dawid (2005) both emphasise the 'human' nature of storytelling as a teaching tool, emphasising that teachers can use this to their advantage – as a pedagogical approach, storytelling is underpinned by constructivist theory: each listener constructing his understanding based on experience. The teacher's role is to provide a bridge which will help create that understanding (see section 2.5.3, p.78, above). Pollicino (2008) reaffirms this human element of storytelling when she refers to the listeners' rapport with the storyteller and the storyteller's

immersion in the story as being the two most important influences on listeners' engagement with the story. She underlines the fact that engagement is essential if the listener is to become receptive to new ideas.

Harrett (2009) notes a multiplicity of educational benefits to be derived from using storytelling techniques in the classroom, including the development of language skills, thinking skills, and cultural and social understanding. Harrett points out, however, that an over-emphasis on written evidence in assessing learning outcomes derived from storytelling can have a detrimental effect, 'spoiling' a story, and eroding learning. She regards the *process* as being as important as the *product.*

In its report, the National Council of Teachers of English (2000) calls attention to the fact that storytelling has long been a medium through which people learn. The Council also notes that an over-emphasis on the written word can demote the purely oral aspects of storytelling, and they caution that an absence of respect for the oral form can deprive listeners of a potentially profound learning experience which is dependent on the relationship between listener and speaker.

Isbell, Sobol, Lidauer and Lowrance (2004) gathered data over a 15-week period using language transcripts from 3-5 year old participants' responses to retelling stories and creating a story using a wordless picture book. Pre- and post-script analyses were used to compare language complexity and story comprehension. Their study showed that in two comparable groups of children, those who heard stories told from memory and those who heard stories read from a text both benefitted, but in

different ways. While both groups showed development in terms of their oral skills, the group who heard stories told from memory demonstrated improved story comprehension, while those who heard stories read from a text showed improvements in language complexity. However, the researchers noted that the children who heard stories told from memory demonstrated a greater degree of engagement than those who had stories read to them. This finding is a significant one in terms of its relevance to pedagogy, suggesting that *both* means of sharing story should be used in the classroom if maximum learning benefits are to accrue.

Data collected from around 15,000 children for the Millennium Cohort Study, although not related to classroom practice, suggest that where parents/carers read to children on a daily basis, this, among other factors, can help to reduce the impact of social inequalities that result in a gap in the development of verbal skills (Kelly, Sacker, Del Bono, Francesconi and Marmot, 2011). They propose that this is due in part to the social bond created as a result of the interaction, echoing the findings of the studies mentioned above.

2.6.2. Affective goals

As well as supporting general cognitive skills, language development, and social development, story is also used as a mechanism for supporting emotional development. Teglasi and Rothman (2001) report on a project in which stories were used with groups of children to improve their problem-solving approaches to dealing with aggressive behaviour. The story form lends itself well to the exploration of emotions as it allows discussion to take place in the third person, based on

characters in the story. Although the results of this study come with some caveats (the central one being the importance of ensuring that the project-leader is well-trained in respect of, for example, child development and group dynamics), the authors are cautiously positive about the outcomes. Further studies reporting on the use of stories to support emotional development include those of Tucker (2006), who explored the use of story in helping children to deal with themes of sadness and loss; and Baskerville (2011), who looked at stories as a way to support the development of positive relationships in a multi-cultural classroom. These studies all demonstrate the strength of story as a pedagogical approach in supporting affective learning goals. Each of these studies, however, is clear in underlining the importance of the teacher's role in facilitating the learning experience as noted above (see section 2.5.3, p.76).

2.6.3. Curricular goals

There are many studies relating the use of story to specific curricular goals. Although some subjects lend themselves more naturally to the support of the narrative form – it is not so surprising that literacy-related subjects such as reading, writing and story construction should be well served by story as a pedagogical approach – subjects such as science and mathematics, seen as belonging to a 'paradigmatic' tradition of cognitive processing (see section 2.4.1, p.63 above), can, research suggests, also be supported by a story-based pedagogy. The results of an empirical study by Rice, Zachos, Burgin and Doane. (2005) show learning in science is enriched by the use of stories that provide a framework within which students (and teachers) can relate to nature and

science in a more personal way. This notion is reinforced by Grover, Monroe and Jacobs (2006), whose discussion notes the way stories help children connect their learning in mathematics with their lives.

Stories can be used in different ways to promote learning goals – as a motivational tool which is intended to '… spark students' curiosity and motivate them to engage in learning and to broaden their horizons, taking them beyond the limitations of conventional classroom practice.' (Rice *et al.*, 2005) as a means of demonstrating, transmitting, or applying target concepts, skills or key knowledge (Grover *et al*. 2006); and as a context in which concepts, skills or key knowledge can be developed and explored (WOSDEC, 2011).

Andrew, Hull and Donahue (2009) identify four instructional methods related to storytelling: case-based, narrative-based, scenario-based, and problem-based instruction. Case-based instruction refers to the use of story relative to 'specific situations in the past', making this type of story use very pertinent for interpreting and reflecting on real-life scenarios, and well-suited to use by, for example, health professionals and business managers. Narrative-based instruction is described as positioning the learner within the narrator's context and control (Cobley, 2001): the narrator controls the flow of information. This type of instruction can be based on actual or fictional events, and it is into this category that many of the published programmes of work for classroom use fall. Scenario-based instruction places the learner within the context of the story. This type of story use is interactive, with the learner influencing story outcomes. The drama curriculum makes use of this type of story, as does

the Storyline Method (2.6.8 below). This type of story is also used in training: for example, by the emergency services (Moats and Chermack, 2008), and it is well suited to the medium of computer presentation. Games-based learning (GBL) is another form of scenario-based instruction, and one which is gaining currency in schools (Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2007; and Miller, Hudson, Shimi and Miller, 2010) to support learning in a variety of areas, including transition and peer mentoring. Problem-based instruction has no preformed solution criteria, and although the teacher may facilitate the discussion, she will typically refrain from providing facts or knowledge, allowing the learner to take responsibility for finding his own solution (Savery, 2006).

The section that follows looks at some current educational programmes that use story, and notes the ways in which they are underpinned by some of these theoretical perspectives.

2.6.4. Some current story-based programmes

There are many educational programmes in current use in schools which seek to take advantage of story in support of learning and teaching, and this chapter looks at some of these – Robert Fisher's *Stories for Thinking* (Fisher, 1996), which focuses on philosophical thinking and metacognition; *Telling Tales* (Smart Learning Ltd., 2007), a teaching programme in Personal, Social and Health Development (PSHD) and Citizenship; *Godly Play* (Berryman, 1995), an approach to teaching religious education based on Montessorian principles; and the *Storyline* method (Bell and Harkness, 2006), an integrated approach to learning and teaching which has attracted a good deal of scholarly interest. The

final educational approach ('programme' would be too limiting a term) discussed in this section is *Solution-Focused Thinking* (Ajmal and Rees, 2001). This approach uses case-based instruction, and is used as a way of solving problems in schools (often used in connection with behavioural issues). These programmes and approaches were selected as providing exemplars of the four instructional methods identified by Andrew, Hull and Donahue (2009) (see above, p.86).

2.6.5. Stories for Thinking (Fisher, 1996)

The *Stories for Thinking* teaching programme, designed by Robert Fisher (1996), aims to develop thinking, learning and language skills. Robert Fisher is a Professor of Education at Brunel University, London, and much of his work centres on thinking skills and philosophy for children. His stories are designed to be used either for their own sake – as a source of pleasure and entertainment – or as a vehicle for thinking and discussion. He endorses Egan's (1986) assertion that story assists even young children in developing thinking skills, and he believes that story stimulates 'a love of literature through exposure to familiar story forms' (Fisher 1996, p.2). This programme provides a series of suggestions as to how stories might be used to promote thinking skills based primarily on three processes: questioning, interpreting, and discussing. Teachers are encouraged to question children's thoughts and reactions to stories in order to assist pupils in constructing their own understanding of the narrative, and to encourage children to ask questions to help them derive their own conclusions. Teachers are further encouraged to interpret the narrative in order to assist in meaning-making.

Each story in the programme includes two discussion plans – one which focuses on the story itself, and which encourages exploration and development of children's understanding of the narrative (supporting the development of cognitive links) and a second which focuses on a key theme of the story. This second discussion plan moves away from the story itself, and is only tangentially related to the story. On examination of several of these secondary discussion plans, it would appear that they could, in theory, stand alone – that is to say, they are not dependent on the pupils' having been exposed to the story. In respect of these, therefore, the story itself could be said to have been used for its entertainment value – to engage the pupils' attention in preparation for the discussion, or as a means of contextualising the learning which is to follow. This conforms to Andrews, Hull and Donahue's (2009) and definition and is supported by Cobley's (2001) definition of narrative-based instruction, given that the learner is positioned within the narrator's (in this case, the teacher's) context and control.

2.6.6 Telling Tales (Smart Learning Ltd., 2007)

Telling Tales is a teaching programme directed at different stages of the primary school, which aims to teach Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship through literacy. The programme employs a traditional approach to the use of story in support of the school curriculum, in that it defines units of learning based on PSHE and Citizenship themes, sets out learning objectives within these themes, and then matches a stage-appropriate story to these objectives in terms of aspects of the story. The programme uses discussion methods to explore

aspects of the story which address the learning objectives, as well as suggesting linked activities (often an art and craft activity, but also activities linked to literacy (for example, vocabulary building), drama, mathematics, and so on.

The lessons are planned in three steps – an introduction, where the concepts to be promoted are introduced and the story is read (in the case of this programme, the stories selected are intended to be familiar and easily accessible classroom texts), followed by a group or individual activity, and then a plenary session. The plenary session allows the teacher to further discuss the concepts addressed in the lesson objectives with the pupils. The programme also offers suggestions for follow-up activities, for circle-time discussion related to the themes of the story, for activities which pupils can do at home (perhaps as homework) and for ideas for class or school assemblies which link to the themes of the story.

Although the programme is prescriptive, it is comprehensive, offers scope for choice within the activities suggested which would allow the class teacher to deliver any given lesson in a way which could be tailored to meet the needs of a particular class; it uses well-known and easily obtained texts of acknowledged quality by well-respected children's writers, for example, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle (2002), *My Amazing Body* by Pat Thomas (2002) and *So Much!* by Trish Cooke, (2008). The programme employs a traditional approach to the use of story in the classroom – that of the reading of a story, followed by discussion and a related activity. This is only a very slight variation on the standard three-part lesson: 'exposition – activity – recap.', a teaching method which

has been used in classrooms for many years, and which continues to be used. In the case of a story-based lesson such as those in this programme, the story is used as a way of engaging the pupils' attention, and of providing a meaningful context for discussion of ideas (and one which allows examination of the viewpoints of others in respect of the characters in the story).

It is the discussion which follows the story that allows the learning objectives to be met, and the success of this is dependent on the skill of the teacher. In order for this discussion to be effective in meeting the objectives, the story is in some respects superfluous: the lesson could be delivered without it, for example by means of addressing the issues embedded in the story in a more didactic way. The use of an activity relating to the theme of the story serves to give the learner time to reflect on and internalise the learning objectives (Kolb, 1984), while the plenary session allows the teacher to reinforce the learning as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching (and to revisit aspects of the lesson where necessary). This is a widely used model, and this programme is only one example which utilises the model. Many teachers use self-selected stories in the same way. BBC Education Broadcasting is a further example of the same model presented in different media (that is, audio and video material). This programme is a further example of narrative-based instruction (as above, Andrews, Hull and Donahue (2009), and Cobley, (2001)).

2.6.7 Godly Play (Berryman, 1995)

Godly Play has been devised as an approach to religious education and spiritual development, and is based on Montessorian principles which emphasise a 'simple-to-complex model' (Bruce 1987, p.15). As Bruce notes, in Montessori's approach to learning, 'links are gradually built, step by step, and a complicated world is thereby carefully made comprehensible' (1987, p.15). According to Bruce *(ibid.),* Montessorian principles maintain that children are self-motivating, and it is the responsibility of the adult not to direct the child, but rather to provide a prepared environment which will promote *self*-directed tasks. Montessorian pedagogy recommends that children have *real* rather than artificially-constructed experiences, and proposes that they need to be allowed to make sense of these without adult interference. In his book, *Godly Play*, Berryman (1995) also links the methods used with the theories of Winnicott (1971). Berryman maintains that play takes place in a 'neutral area of experience' (1995, p.10) that is neither real nor unreal but which comprises elements of each, and straddles both. He underlines the importance of allowing the child to be spontaneous in his play in order to allow growth (and in the case of Godly Play, the reference is to spiritual growth) to take place.

Godly Play is based on the use of storytelling, and involves a combination of six interconnected factors which work together. These are:

- wonder
- community (ethics)

- existential limit
- religious language
- creative process
- Holy Eucharist.

The lesson starts with storytelling, which is described as the 'spoken' lesson, and which focuses on the first three of the six factors (that is, wonder/existential limits/creative process), and which is intended to engage the listener, and to evoke a sense of wonder; the teacher (or storyteller) is directed to 'manifest' this wonder in order to provide an example, and to do so in such a way as to encourage an open, 'playful' and creative learning environment. The teacher is discouraged from *telling* the children what the story means, but is advised instead to encourage open discussion in order that the listeners will arrive at their own conclusions. After the story and discussion (during which the children will be given, by example, access to appropriate language and vocabulary to frame their thinking), children are then given time and free access to a variety of materials (art materials, toys) and are encouraged to respond to the session in whatever way they wish – through art, play, or, should they choose, in silence (which should be respected by the teacher).

The second part of the lesson is the 'unspoken' part. This part has to do with the underlying elements which are implicit rather than explicit in the lesson: elements affecting the community and ethics of the classroom (such as the organisation of space and the care and respect given to people and objects in the room), the time structure of a class (allowing

time for participating in, and responding to the lesson as well as the time spent entering and leaving the space), the people involved (and how they are supported in participating in the lesson).

In addressing both the explicit (content) and implicit (approach) aspects of the lesson, *Godly Play* provides an integrated methodology for learning and teaching. The fact that the teacher, while facilitating discussion, refrains from identifying an outcome, instead leaving learners to assimilate knowledge and develop their own understanding, locates this programme within the field of problem-based instruction (Savery, 2006).

Godly Play has inspired further developments in reflective storytelling (Keeble and Burton, 2013) which have been used to support the Religious Education curriculum in the primary school in England (Diocese of St Edmundsbury, 2010)

2.6.8 The Storyline Method (Bell and Harkness, 2006)

Storyline was developed in Glasgow in the late 1960s by Steve Bell, Sallie Harkness and Fred Rendell at what was then Jordanhill College of Education and is now part of Strathclyde University. It was developed in response to the needs of the primary curriculum of the day (SED, 1965) which emphasised holistic and thematic approaches to learning and teaching, and although it fell out of favour after curriculum changes in the 1980s and 1990s, it now has a growing international reputation among teachers, especially in the USA, parts of Asia and in Northern Europe. Recent curriculum developments in Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2004) have caused a resurgence of interest in the method.

Storyline (Cresswell, 1997; Bell and Harkness, 2006; Bell, Harkness and White, 2007) is a narrative approach to organising learning and teaching which uses an integrated methodology to create links across the school curriculum. *Storyline* uses story in three ways. The story itself is used as a context for educational content. The *Storyline* method also uses the key features of the story – setting/event(s)/conclusion – as a planning model, and as a pedagogical approach in which pupils construct their own knowledge within the context of the story.

It is widely recognised among educators that learning which occurs within a meaningful context is more likely to result in deep-level learning (Marton and Säljö, 1976). Children's earliest learning experiences are holistic – learning takes place in the context of the child's whole experience, it relates to his whole existence, and is therefore assimilated at a deep level (Smetana,1993). *Storyline* attempts to replicate this approach to learning by providing a context (in the form of a story setting which is developed by the learners within a framework set by the teacher) which will promote deep learning.

Exponents of the *Storyline* method maintain that it is a pedagogical approach to learning and teaching which is theoretically robust, and which can be applied in a range of learning contexts. Scholarly authors (*inter alia* Falkenberg, 2007 link *Storyline* to constructivism, and cite the influence of Bruner (1996). Constructivist theory, according to Karagiorgi and Symeou (2005), involves the active construction of knowledge, and is a way of enabling the individual to understand his world by making links between new and prior knowledge. That is to say, the constructivist

approach is not a direct transmission approach to knowledge and skill acquisition (instruction), but rather emphasises the need for the learner to actively engage in the learning process by constructing his own outcomes in the light of experience. *Storyline* is constructivist in its approach insofar that the learners actively participate as characters within the story, and drive the story forward according to their own needs and interests based on the stage of understanding they are at. Thus with *Storyline*, although the teacher provides a framework for learning (and plans with curricular goals in mind), the final decisions about the direction and detail of the story is left to the participants.

There is some evidence to support the success of the *Storyline* method, not only in primary schools (*inter alia* Bell and Harkness, 2006), but also in secondary schools (Brounlow, 2007; Boström, 2008), as a teaching tool with university students in both the foreign language classroom (Kocher, 2007), and the psychology classroom (Penrod, 2009), and also by health professionals (Mark, 2009). *Storyline* conforms to Andrews, Hull and Donahue's (2009) description of scenario-based instruction, positioning the learner as it does in an interactive experience that allows for a variety of outcomes, while remaining under the control of the teacher who has constructed the scenarios to meet specific learning outcomes.

2.6.9 Solution-focused Thinking.

In terms of story-based approaches, Solution-focused Thinking might not be immediately identifiable with 'story' or 'storytelling'. However, if Andrews, Hull and Donahue's (2009) definition of case-based instruction

is accepted as using story-telling techniques, then Solution-focused Thinking may be examined as an exemplar.

Solution-focused Thinking has its origins in family therapy (Rhodes and Ajmal, 2004), and has been developed for use in schools as a way of addressing everyday problems – most usually behavioural issues or for resolving disputes. The underpinning philosophy of solution-focused approaches to problem-solving is that past events can be explored as a source for change. The process of solution-focused thinking begins with the examining of the issue (or 'case'), and identifying positive aspects within this, focusing on these, and extending them (Ajmal, 2001). This differs from traditional approaches to problem resolution in schools as rather than focusing on what has gone wrong, searching for the reasons for this, and apportioning blame (and usually, punishment), the emphasis is on what has gone (or could potentially) go *right.* McGlone (2001) describes an approach in which she documented an alternative to the 'problem story' *(ibid.,* p.125). She describes using storytelling techniques to encourage pupils experiencing difficulties to author versions of their lives where the problems they were experiencing were not present, and using this as a starting point for discussion on how these new stories could be realised.

Andrews, Hull and Donahue (2009) describe case-based instruction as detailing concrete events and descriptive facts as they actually happened. In terms of Ajmal's (2001) description of solution-focused thinking, where the emphasis is on examining the 'case' for positive attributes which could be extended, this corresponds very well. In respect

of McGlone's (2001) example however, there appears at first to be something of a mis-match. Cases, according to Andrews, Hull and Donahue (*ibid.*p.8*)*, 'have a known outcome, and are not interactive in the sense that learners' decisions do not have an effect on the outcomes'. McGlone's example, however, does begin with case-based instruction (at the point where the learner details the case as it *was*), using this as a starting point for problem resolution.

2.6.10 Summation of section.

There are many educational programmes and approaches currently in use in schools which use story as a starting point, and they do so in different ways.

Those I have looked at, Fisher's *Stories for Thinking* (1996), Smart Learning Limited's *Telling Tales* (2007), Berryman's *Godly Play* (1995), Bell and Harkness' *Storyline* Method (2006) and Solution Focused Thinking (Ajmal and Rees, 2001; Sklare, 2004, and Rhodes and Ajmal, 2004) are only a small sample. What they have in common is the key role played by the teacher in supporting or facilitating the construction of meaning according to the pupils' prior knowledge and experiences, and (in the case of the first four) in encouraging and supporting the interpretation of metaphor and analogy implicit in the story.

2.7 SUMMARY

The literature review has discussed and defined the notion of story – both in its 'soft' (abstract) form, and its 'hard' (represented) form. A story map has been produced which synthesises elements from various

sources, and a revised definition of narrative has been offered. Deep learning and narrative modes of cognition have been discussed, and it has been noted that story as a form is uniquely placed in supporting both. The development of story has been traced over time, and new approaches to story structures resulting from technological change have been indicated. The process of analogy, by which story often achieves impact and meaning, is acknowledged, as is the role of the teacher in encouraging and supporting this.

Four instructional methods associated with storytelling are identified, and five story-based educational programmes - *Stories for Thinking* (Fisher, 1996), *Telling Tales* (Smart Learning Limited, 2007), *Godly Play* (Berryman, 1995), The *Storyline* Method (Bell and Harkness, 2006) and Solution Focused Thinking (inter alia Ajmal and Rees, 2001) in current use in schools are identified and compared in relation to these.

2.8 CONCLUSIONS

The review above raises some points which require clarification. It is evident from the literature that there is little general consensus in respect of the terminology used. There is some degree of overlap in the terms story/narrative, with the two on occasion being used interchangeably (by, for example, Polkinghorne, 1988). The idea of what constitutes a ‘story’ is the subject of much discussion, and as a result of this, further clarification of teachers’ own understanding of the term will be sought in the empirical study in order to ensure that a clear working definition is established.

The literature notes that story supports the development of a variety of learning goals: both general (for example, metacognitive skills) and more specific, and affective (behavioural, social, emotional goals) as well as cognitive (knowledge and understanding). This raises the question of whether teachers subscribe to this belief and whether they plan purposively in response to these goals. If, as the literature suggests, story supports metacognitive development (Collins and Cooper, 1997), pupils, as well as teachers, might be asked to reflect on what makes for a good story for classroom use.

The literature on analogous use of story clearly notes the importance of the teacher's role in mediating the analogy in order to support understanding (Goswami, 1992). The current study will therefore seek to establish whether teachers are explicit in consideration of this by examining the ways in which they use story in their classrooms.

Finally, in looking at story as pedagogy, it is apparent that many studies emanate from the United States, and that a minority of academic papers appears to relate work carried out in a Scottish context. While this may not be altogether surprising given the comparative sizes of the two countries, it does lead to questions about the position of story as a pedagogical approach in Scotland. Certainly Education Scotland, the principal curriculum body for Scotland, supports story as pedagogy in *Curriculum for Excellence* and to that end has many story-based resources on its website (www.ltscotland.org.uk.). Further, *GLOW*, the national intranet for education, includes links to research, case studies and projects relating to the use of story in the classroom. Both of these, along

with, for example, The Scottish Storytelling Centre, tend to refer to pockets of practice (although some of these are quite large – Scottish Opera's *Big Hairy Hamish* project (2011) involved some 960 pupils in 27 schools in Perth and Kinross) rather than a consistent, nationwide-approach. How far story is accepted as a credible and professionally accepted pedagogical approach which is explicitly planned for and against which learning outcomes are assessed, rather than an *ad hoc* strategy bears some investigation.

In keeping with the inductive nature of the study thus far, the research question is extended as follows:

What is the extent of story use in the Scottish primary school classroom, and what are teachers' purposes and beliefs about the use of story in support of learning?

1. **What is story – how do teachers define 'story'?**

2. **How do teachers use stories in their classrooms?**

3. **What makes a 'good' story for classroom use?**

4. **How purposively do teachers plan for story use in response to learning goals?**

Chapter Three will go on to describe and justify the approaches to the study, and will provide a rationale for the data collection methods used.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGIES OF THE STUDY

The previous chapter provided a background to the study in terms of established literature. This chapter describes the methodological frameworks informing the study, and considers approaches to sampling methods, and to data collection and analysis. It also examines issues of generalisabilty, reliability and validity.

3.1 ONTOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY

In order to set this study in a methodological context, a discussion is presented of both the epistemological and ontological issues and traditions by which it is informed.

3.1.1 Positivism and relativism

A standard 'positivist' view of scientific research suggests that it is objective, value-free, and fact-based (Robson, 2002). Further, it is largely based on quantitative data collected from direct experience. Positivist research attempts to use observation and reason to explain phenomena (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). However, although this approach may be appropriate in natural science (and there are certainly difficulties to be overcome even there – hence the need for scientific laboratories which exist to control research conditions in a way that is not possible in the natural world), social science research provides a further complication.

Social science research, focussing as it does on people, cannot provide examples of constant relationships between events – the consciousness and free will of the participants will always impact on their behaviour.

'Consciousness' in particular has relevance to the work of the social scientist. The subject's awareness of his own situation and his relationship with the researcher (however tenuous) has an effect on the responses provided. Therefore, a subject might present himself in what he perceives to be a 'good light' by responding in a certain way.

Alternatively, a subject may elect to distance himself from the researcher, or even to sabotage the interview. There are many different scenarios which could potentially lead to the same subject offering widely varying responses to the same set of interview questions – time of day, mood, and perceptions about the interviewer or the purpose of the interview, and so on. Any of these may lead the subject to respond in such a way as to present himself in a particular light (Miller and Glassner, 2004, in Silverman, 2004).

The positivist approach, therefore, provides a problematic model for social science research, even before considering whether or not it is wholly appropriate for natural science (and there are critics who would claim that it is not (Blaikie, 1993).

The relativist approach maintains, according to Robson (2002, p.22) that:

> *There is no external reality independent of human consciousness; there are only different sets of meanings and classifications which people attach to the world.*

This approach usually uses qualitative methods of data collection and analysis, and it depends on a viewpoint which accepts varied accounts and theories of research phenomena as equally valid – it does not depend on traditional scientific frameworks. Relativism disputes the existence of any reality which is independent of beliefs and concepts, but instead views reality as that which is defined by the subjects of the research.

Current views of social research include the 'constructivist' approach (Robson, 2002), on which this study is based. This approach, also known as 'interpretivist' and 'naturalistic' (*ibid.,* 2002), uses methods such as interviews and observations to obtain multiple perspectives in order to construct a reality which is neither wholly objective nor completely subjective. Robson (*ibid.,* 2002, p.25) notes that a main feature of this approach is that 'Reality is represented through the eyes of the participants.' The current study aims to collect and collate ideas about this reality as reported by the teachers and others who took part.

3.1.2 Quantitative and qualitative methods

The study makes use of a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative methods, with different parts of the study relying on different methodological emphases.

The two approaches have been traditionally viewed as being in opposition to each other, with quantitative research being seen as 'objective' and 'fact-based', while qualitative research has been regarded as 'subjective' and 'value-laden'. Modern writers are increasingly emphasising a need to combine elements of both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to provide a fuller picture of the results of

research. Wellington (2000, p. 17) offers a succinct analogy to justify combining the two approaches. He notes that in analysing data from, for example, a football (soccer) match, we make use of not only quantitative information (for example, scores), but also qualitative information such as who played well, who scored, how well the game was played. The combination of the two sets of information, he maintains, gives us a more complete picture of the game itself.

The apparent dichotomy between the two approaches – quantitative and qualitative methods – is in itself based on the premise that research can be completely objective. Connolly (2006) discusses the fact that research has been traditionally categorised as either qualitative *or* quantitative, and he goes on to note that the argument that the notion of quantitative data being 'objective' compared with the 'subjective' nature of qualitative data is a spurious one. His premise is interesting – he suggests that complete researcher objectivity is unlikely, noting that:

> *… subjective decisions are made as soon as you make a decision to focus on a particular issue and collect quantitative data on it. Moreover, the measures that are actually used to represent the issue at hand all reflect the values and assumptions of the researcher.*
>
> (Connolly, 2006, p.5)

Bruner (1986) puts forward an analysis of two modes of understanding – the 'paradigmatic' and the 'narrative' modes. Although the paradigmatic mode corresponds most closely to quantitative analysis in that it is concerned with making formal connections between ideas in a

'logical' and verifiable way, he maintains that the narrative mode of understanding, being that which is most instinctive, often precedes the paradigmatic in any case. Bruner argues that even in a scientific (positivist) approach, informal connections based on qualitative analyses form the basis of schematic theses before paradigmatic investigations take place. The scientist makes decisions about what to investigate, and how to conduct an investigation, based on his own interpretations of observed phenomena. Wellington (2000) supports this notion when he acknowledges that quantitative methods, being employed by people, can never be truly objective or value-free.

Connolly (2006) discusses the divide in approaches to research methods, and emphasises that tactical use of qualitative and quantitative methods side by side can enhance understanding of outcomes. He is critical of the emphasis placed on solely qualitative methods in educational research, and maintains that educational researchers can make use of quantitative methods.

This project made use of multiple methods, with the intention of using different sources to corroborate (or contradict) each other, and to examine some different perspectives which might add to an understanding of the way that story is used and perceived in the classroom. This methodological 'triangulation' (Robson, 2002), the use of multiple methods in the collection of data (which may also be drawn from different contexts or participants), may be said to provide a more 'holistic' view of the study. This is particularly the case in an investigation such as this, where the intention is to attempt to gain insights into a phenomenon (the use of

story) that may be taken for granted and even regarded as mundane. In holding a prism up to the focus of the study, however, while allowing us to view the subject in different ways through different facets, we should recognise that the final 'image' arrived at may be fragmented: we should not believe that simply because we have multiple perspectives we have a wholly *accurate* picture: we have a *multi-dimensional* picture. The cubist portraits of Picasso show *a* reality – not necessarily *the* reality. This view is endorsed by Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) who remind us that it is optimistic to believe that because we have more data, and from different sources, we necessarily have a complete picture.

The details of the methods adopted in each of the five parts of the empirical work will be discussed in Chapter Four under the following headings:

PART 1: Storyteller/Teacher Interviews

PART 2: Angus Teacher Surveys/Student Observations

PART 3: Dundee Primary School Story Sessions

PART 4: Angus Schools' Pupil and Teacher Interviews

PART 5: National Survey

3.1.3 Epistemology

This study takes a post-positivist approach towards data collection and analysis, which neither maintains that one reality exists which is the researcher's job to discover, nor denies *all* claims to objectivity. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) note that in the post-positivist view all

knowledge of the world is ‘conjectural, falsifiable, challengeable, changing’ (p.27). They contend that post-positivism proposes ‘multiple, co-existing realities’ (*ibid.).* These ‘realities’ would be those defined by the perceptions of those involved in the research. This is a constructivist approach (noted prevviously in section 3.1.2, p.104) which, while committing to objectivity, recognises the limitations on this caused by the potential interpretations, biases and values of the researcher. Post-positivism is defined by Jameson (1991) as having several features that distinguish it from other approaches, including the absence of overarching premises; an appreciation of variety, diversity and subjectivity; the importance of context in understanding phenomena; and the recognition that researchers are part of the fabric of the research. Mason (1996) draws attention to the fact that choices made about methodologies are likely to be influenced by the researcher’s own background and experience, and in reflecting on this it became clear to me that certain decisions taken in respect of my own investigations were made as a result of my familiarity with the classroom context. I was comfortable with the idea of approaching both teachers and pupils within their own classrooms. This derived from my sense that, so far as the teachers were concerned, I was ‘one of them’. This was due to the many years of experience as a classroom teacher and led me to believe that I would be able to engage in discussion using a common language, and that we, both the interviewees and I, would be able to achieve a mutual understanding. I was not apprehensive about approaching schools, and have an appreciation of the diplomacies necessary to ensure the interviews could be approached in

such a way as to ensure a positive experience for all those concerned. This includes such aspects as understanding school hierarchies (whom should be approached for permissions, and in what order), arranging appropriate timings for the interviews that matched the requirements of the school day and would be therefore least likely to be declined, and an appreciation of the other demands on the teachers' working day that might impact on their attitudes towards giving up time to respond to requests for assistance in an external project. Previous experience as a class teacher would also allow me to relate to the interviewees to some extent as a 'colleague' rather than as a 'researcher', with the implicit reassurance that the project would be of professional interest. The project was presented as a consultation exercise, casting the interviewees in the role of expert, with the potentiality that their expertise could be shared with other, less experienced colleagues.

A further influencing factor in the selection of data collection methods was that as a teacher of many years' experience, I am comfortable about approaching pupils in the classroom context. My extensive experience of talking to pupils, allowed for few apprehensions or reservations on my part about conducting interviews with them, although acknowledgement must be made of my relative inexperience as a researcher.

There is some recognition that the researcher himself is in fact an instrument of the study, and that his experience should therefore be acknowledged (*inter alia* Maxwell, 2004, Glesne and Peshkin, 1992: see above, page 20). Carr and Kemmis (1986) draw attention to a wide range

of knowledge the teacher-researcher brings to classroom research, and lists some of these kinds of knowledge as:

- common-sense knowledge
- skill-knowledge
- contextual knowledge
- professional knowledge
- theoretical knowledge
- social/moral/philosophical knowledge

Throughout the course of the study, an appreciation developed that even ostensibly quantitative data have a qualitative aspect, being founded on decisions taken by people (Wellington, 2000 and Connolly, 2006), and are therefore influenced by them, leading to a heightened appreciation of its relevance in social science research.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Table 9. Overview of Methodologies

Part	**Time-line**	**Relation-ship to Research Question**	**Aim**	**Data Collection Methods**	**Sampling Method**	**Number in sample**	**Articulation**
1. Storyteller/ Teacher Interviews	March/ April 2008	Q1	To establish a working definition of the terminology of the study	Semi-structured focus group interviews	Both purposive, non-probability samples	Storytellers *n*= 12 Teachers *n*=6	The results of this part of the study help to inform the production of a questionnaire which forms Part 2.
2. Angus Teacher Surveys/ Student Obs	April-June 2009	Q4	a) To establish the extent and purposes of story use in the classroom, and how systematic teachers' approach to this is. b) To provide triangulation in support of the above.	a) Postal questionnaire b) Observational checklist	Both purposive, non-probability samples	a) Teachers *n*=53 (34% of total surveyed) b)Students *n* =14 (31% of total surveyed)	a) The results inform a nation-wide survey (Part5).
3. Dundee Primary School Story Sessions	Nov. 2009	Q3	To investigate children's perceptions of learning outcomes.	Researcher-administered questionnaire	Purposive, non-probability sample	Pupils *n*=53 (100% of total surveyed)	To establish a baseline understanding of pupils' metacognitive awareness *vis à vis* story which informs interviews in Part 4.
4. Angus Pupil/ Teacher Interviews	June 2010	Q2 Q3 Q4	a)To further explore teachers' aims and perceptions of classroom use of story b) To explore extent of pupils' appreciation of story approaches and understanding of the impact of story on learning.	a) semi-structured individual interviews b) semi-structured group interviews	Both purposive, non-probability samples	a)Teachers *n*= 10 b) Pupils *n*=111	To further investigate the trends evident in the results from Part 2.
5. National Teacher Survey	March 2012	Q2 Q4	To establish the extent and purposes of story use in the classroom across the country, and how systematic teachers' approach to this is.	e-survey	Whole population sample*	Teachers *n*=728	To extend the scope of the responses from Part 2 (Teacher Surveys) To focus on the external validity of earlier result.

**Although the whole Scottish primary teaching population was sampled, the final number of respondents was self-selected. For discussion on this see p.205.*

3.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

There were a series of ethical considerations to be addressed in respect of the undertaking of and reporting on this project.

At a primary level, there were protocols that had to be complied with. These included (in chronological order):

- Approval from the University of Dundee Research Ethics Committee
- Approval from the Local Education Authorities targeted by the empirical studies
- Approval from the individual schools targeted by the empirical studies
- Permissions from all those involved in the data collection – teachers, students, and pupils. In respect of the latter, the *requirement* was that permission be sought from parents. However, it was considered appropriate for reasons discussed in a later section (see 3.10.1, p.191) that permission also be sought from participating pupils.

These considerations were addressed in the following ways (Table 10 below):

Table 10. Permissions sought for the study.

Date	Authority	Documentation
Mar 2008	• Scottish Storytelling Centre • Participants of Oral Storytelling Course	• Participant Information Sheets (i) • Participant Consent Forms (ii)
Aug2008	• University of Dundee Research Ethics Committee	• Approval Form (iii) • Supplementary Information (iv)
Aug 2008	• Angus Council	• Application for Undertaking Research in Angus Council Schools (v)
Feb 2009	• All Head Teachers of Angus schools • Class teachers of P1-3 classes in Angus schools	• Participant Information Sheets (vi) • Participant Consent Forms (ii)
Nov 2009	• Head Teacher of Dundee Primary School • Class teachers of P6/7 classes • Pupils in P6/7 classes*	• Participant Information Sheets (vii- viii) • Participant Consent Sheets (ii)
May2010	• Head Teachers of target schools • Class teachers • Students	• Participant Information Sheets (x-xii) • Participant Consent Sheets(ii)
Jun 2010	• Head Teachers of target schools • Class teachers • Parents • Pupils*	• Participant Information Sheets (i) • Participant Consent Sheets (ii), • Parent permission letter (xiv)
Feb 2012	• All Scottish LEAs • Head Teachers of target schools • All teachers responding to National Survey	• Communications re National survey (xv) • Survey promotional flyer (xvi)

The documentation listed above is available in Appendix 20, p.470, papers i-xviii. In addition to those ethical considerations that were required, there were also those that were desired. In the case of subjects who are considered ‘vulnerable’ or lacking ‘competence’ to understand what participating in a study involves, proxy consent is required. The school pupils who took part in the Dundee School surveys, and the Angus Schools interviews fall into this category. Parental consent was therefore sought on behalf of these pupils as required. In addition to this, it was deemed desirable to gain the consent of the pupils themselves (there is further discussion of this in section 3.10.1, p.191). It is possible to explain a study in a way that young children can understand (Wiles, Heath, Crow

and Charles, 2005), and to this effect the information sheet provided for these pupils was worded at an appropriate level and was read aloud to them. There are, of course, pressures other than comprehension present when seeking consent from school pupils, and these too have to be taken into consideration. Societal pressure in the form of the power relationship between the children and the researcher, and peer pressure in respect of children's desire to conform with each other both have an impact of the obtaining of 'informed' consent. It is therefore incumbent on the researcher to take these into account when considering the degree of consent that has been given.

Robson (2002,) makes a distinction between 'ethics' and 'morals' when discussing those aspects that should be considered when conducting a research project. Ethics, by his definition, refer to 'rules of conduct', or 'general principles of what one ought to do'. Morals, he contends, are usually taken as 'concerned with whether or not a specific act is consistent with accepted notions of right or wrong' (*ibid.,* p.65-66). Ethically, therefore, parental consent was required in order that pupils take part in the study. Morally, direct consent was sought from the pupils themselves. Further to this moral consent, the researcher (myself) was required to attend diligently to the behaviours of the pupils when taking part in the study, in order to be alert for signs of discomfort that might indicate reluctance on their part, and due attention was given to this (see Section 3.6.24, p. 175). In the event, there was no evidence of children's discomfort or reluctance to participate.

In addition to protocols, there are other considerations that impacted on the study. Wiles *et al.* (2005) refer to a series of 'principle-based approaches' outlined as follows:

- *Autonomy: people must be free to make their own informed decisions about participation in research*
- *Non-maleficence: research must not inflict harm*
- *Beneficence: research should benefit others*
- *Justice: people must be treated equally within the research process.*

(Wiles, Heath, Crow and Charles, 2005: p.7)

These were complied with as follows:

Autonomy

Information was provided as detailed above (Table 10 p.113) and the responses of participants respected.

Non-maleficence

This aspect was attended to with particular reference to stress factors that might potentially apply to participating pupils (see Section 3.10.3, p.196), and also with reference to the dilemma reported in Section 6.1.4, p.377). In this instance, a participating teacher requested the alteration of her response to an interview question. It was determined that by *not* altering her response, some harm might be considered to have been inflicted on her (in respect of her feelings, or her professional reputation) and her request was complied with.

Beneficence

One of the implications that might be drawn from the study is information that will potentially benefit interested parties such as student teachers, or inexperienced teachers when making choices about using stories in their classroom practice.

Justice

In order to comply with this aspect, the study utilised standardised surveys, and interview frameworks so that, as far as possible, all those surveyed or interviewed were treated equally. 'Equally', however, does not necessarily mean 'similarly'. To be treated 'equally' requires that equal respect is offered in each circumstance. Therefore to treat pupils with 'equal' respect to teachers requires that their different needs be equally respected. This meant taking account of such issues as those discussed above in terms of obtaining informed consent, in terms of taking account of attitudes towards the researcher, stress factors, linguistic and conceptual development, and attention span (see sections 3.10.3 - 3.10.5, pp. 196 - 199).

A further aspect that requires consideration in respect of the ethics pertaining to a study such as this, where the researcher is investigating a subject in which he has a professional interest, is the degree of subjectivity applicable to the investigation. Robson (2002, p.71) notes the claim for the positivist approach to research enquiry (see section 3.1.1, p.102) that it is 'objective, value-free, and fact-based'. He proposes, however, that this position is unrealistic, given that even 'the kind of research questions asked involves value judgements' (*ibid.* p.72). Silverman (2005: p. 267)

points out that ‘all research is contaminated to some extent by the values of the researcher’. This study is no different. The way to confront this problem, he suggests, is to clarify intent. This was done throughout the study by laying bare the researcher’s credentials, professional interests and experience, and by honest reflection in respect of issues arising from or impacting on the study. No attempt has been made to suggest the study is value-free, but rather full disclosure of the researcher’s interests have been made in order to allow the reader to interpret the discussion in the light of these.

Kanpol (1998) notes the need for the researcher to be aware of the possible intrusion of his own subjectivity and personal biases. This is reiterated by Hargeaves (1992), who notes that

Teachers’ work is deeply embedded in teachers’ lives, in their pasts, in their biographies, in the cultures or traditions of teaching to which they have become committed. (p.233).

Wilson (2009) suggests that one way to address this is for the researcher to be clear about his own values, and to challenge his existing ideas. It is for this reason that biographical information has been provided in section 1.2 (p.13) outlining my own position in regard to the use of story in schools, and positing the impetus for the study. However, it should be noted that in respect of the data collection, my own biases have been fully taken account of. Indeed, there is recognition that even the language chosen in questioning, may well have alerted respondents to my own

predispositions towards the use of story and thus influenced the responses offered.

One last ethical consideration is addressed in respect of the use of incentives. In Part 2 (Angus Teachers' Survey) and Part 5 (National Survey) an incentive was offered in the form of a draw for a pack of children's books. Wiles *et al.* (2005) observe that there is little consensus about the appropriateness of rewards being offered to research participants. They suggest that this might encourage people to participate for the 'wrong' reasons. The incentive offered for participating in this study was carefully selected to be professionally appropriate, and was at the same time considered to be both sufficiently insignificant in financial terms and attractive in practical terms to the target group (that is, teachers) as to fall into the category of a token of gratitude rather than a payment.

3.4 JUSTIFICATION OF APPROACH TO SAMPLING

The sampling methods were selected for practicability, and the purposive nature of the samples (Wellington, 2000) meant that the objectives of each part of the study could be met. The samples were purposive in that they were all selected with a specific purpose in mind: it was anticipated from the outset that the respondents in each sample would have had some experience of working with story. The main advantage of this method of sampling was that it was easy to gain access to target groups because of both personal and professional contacts, and geographical location, and therefore the study could be conducted over time with minimal obstacles. The same can be said for the non-probability

basis of the sampling. However, it is also true to say that although the samples were selected in this way, they covered a range of Angus schools.

A disadvantage of this sampling method is that there is no statistical relationship between the sample surveyed or interviewed and the general population, and therefore the results cannot be seen as representative: this presents the problem of generalisability. However, Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.57) make the point that 'the goal of a qualitative study is not generalisability' but rather enhanced insight. The National Survey made use of a whole population sample. This was made possible by use of electronic communications (email, LEA intranet, national teacher web service (GLOW).However, it must be acknowledged that although the respondents were drawn from a whole population sample, they were self-selected in terms of whether or not they elected to respond. This must be taken into account when discussing findings. There is a degree to which all respondents in all investigations should be regarded as self-selecting, as the final decision on whether, how, and how far to engage in any investigation rests with the individual respondent. Further discussion of the sampling methods used in each part of the study can be found in Chapter Four.

3.5 JUSTIFICATION OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Table 11. Data Collection Methods Used

	Number in sample	Individual interviews	Focus groups	Questionnaires	Checklists
Part 1: Storyteller/teacher Interviews	Storytellers n=12 Teachers n=6		✓		
Part 2: Teacher Surveys/ Student Observations	Teachers n=53 Students n=14		✓	✓	✓
Part 3: Dundee Primary School Story Sessions	Pupils n=53			✓	
Part 4: Angus Pupil / Teacher Interviews	Pupils n=111 Teachers n=10	✓	✓		
Part 4: National Teacher Surveys	Teachers n=728			✓	

3.5.1 Use of focus groups

The study makes use of focus groups in the Storyteller and the Teacher Interviews in Part 1, in the work which led to the production of the questionnaires in Part 2 (The Angus Teacher Surveys/Student Observations) , and also in the Pupil Interviews in Part 4. Focus groups are sometimes also referred to as ‘discussion groups’, but as pointed out by both Barbour and Kitzinger (1999) and Wellington (2000), they are

more than this. A distinction arises, according to these writers, when the researcher is actively engaged in leading or directing the group interaction (focus group) rather than simply recording the discussion (discussion group).

Based on the work of the above, the main advantages to using focus groups include:

- they promote a naturalistic flow to the discussion which is less daunting to the subjects than a one-to-one interview.
- members of the group can stimulate each other's ideas.
- they can provide a great deal of data in a short time, and are therefore less time-consuming than one-to-one interviews.
- they can provide perspectives not previously engendered by the researcher which can be used to inform later quantitative methods such as questionnaires or surveys.
- they can provide clear examples of appropriate language and phrasing to be used in later parts of a study.

There are, however, disadvantages to this method of data collection, which have to be considered:

- the researcher has to moderate the discussion carefully in order to ensure the participants stay on topic while at the same time allowing divergent ideas and opinions to be expressed.
- the researcher has to be careful to avoid influencing responses.

- the recording of the data can be complicated – note-taking in a group situation is challenging, while some participants may be put off by the presence of a voice-recorder. Transcription of the interview data is time-consuming and can be difficult where several voices are speaking together, or where the quality of the recording is less than optimal.

- there are ethical issues connected with the spontaneous revelation by group members of confidential details.

- some members of the group may feel uncomfortable about expressing views which oppose the majority.

- there is a danger that more vociferous group members' opinions may take prominence (the role of the researcher is important here in ensuring this does not unduly influence the direction of the discussion).

- the analysis of group data is time-consuming, and approaches to doing this have to be carefully matched to the researchers' aims for the data.

In order to minimise the potential effects of these disadvantages, the following steps were taken:

- the discussion was moderated

- care and consideration was given to avoiding influencing responses

- child interviewees were given opportunities to familiarise themselves with the recording device by playing with it before the interviews. Adult interviewees were shown the device. The device was positioned in full view of the interviewees, but to one side, so that it would not be a focus of attention. Once the device was switched on, it was not referred to again, nor was it adjusted in any way, in order to prevent drawing attention to it. A good quality device was used so the recordings were clear. Transcription was done on the same day as the interviews to allow a clear memory of the interview content to assist with any less than optimally recorded responses.

- It was not anticipated that there would be any spontaneous revelation of confidential issues, but there was an awareness that should this be the case (interviews with children, for example, can be unpredictable), the conversation would have been diverted. In the case of child interviewees, any disclosure of this nature would be referred to the class teacher in the first instance, and then the school's child protection officer if appropriate.

- Every attempt was made to make the interviewees feel comfortable (by, for example, chatting casually at the start of the interview, ensuring everyone had a comfortable seat, and was well-positioned, that there was no distracting background noise or draughts, sunlight, etc.) and attention was given to eliciting the views of less vocal members of the group. At the same time,

attention was paid to para-linguistic signals exhibited by group members that might indicate discomfort in order that they might not feel the focus of attention.

3.5.2 Use of questionnaires

Surveys were carried out by means of questionnaires in Part 2: the Angus Teacher Survey, Part 3: the Dundee Primary School Story Sessions , and Part 5: the National Survey. (Appendices 4 , 5 and 17). In the case of the first, the questionnaires were postal, self-administered questionnaires (Oppenheim, 1992). Some of the advantages of this as a method of data collection are:

- the ease with which respondents can be reached.
- it is both cost- and time- effective to the researcher.
- questionnaires may theoretically lessen the possibility of interviewer bias if attention is given to the production of ‘neutral’ wording of statements and questions

There are, however, disadvantages to this method of data collection, and these were addressed as follows:

- The response rate can be low. There does not appear to be a standard definition of an acceptable minimum rate of response, and literature on the subject would indicate that this can vary according to how the questionnaire is distributed as well as the nature of the target audience (including whether or not the audience is a 'captive’

one). Effort was made to maximise returns by offering incentives and by following up non-returns with personal phone calls

- There is the possibility of respondent bias: respondents with an interest in the subject matter (and who are therefore likely to give positive responses) may be more likely to take part. Uninterested parties may simply decline to return the questionnaire. Incentives were offered in the hope that this might encouraged some less-interested parties to respond. Direct contact was made with Heads of school in order to encourage support at an institutional rather than only a personal level.

- Although, as noted above, questionnaires may lessen the possibility of interviewer bias, there is an alternative viewpoint. The 'voice' of the interviewer (and attendant biases) may be present in the questions themselves (both in terms of the selection of questions and the precise wording of these), and more generally, in the style and presentation of the survey 'package'. Steps were taken to address this issue by using focus group interviews to inform the wording used in the questionnaires.

- Questionnaires offer no opportunity to correct misunderstandings in the wording of the questions, or to offer explanations or clarifications. For this reason, the wording of the questions in the teacher survey was carefully tested in focus group interviews before preparing the final version of the questionnaire, and further

feedback was sought in order to inform the production of the later, online surveys.

The questionnaire in Part 2 (the Dundee Primary School Story Sessions) was not postal, but was a group-administered questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1992) presented to pupils by me (the researcher). I explained the purpose of the questionnaire, and the respondents (the pupils) were left to complete it with no interference. This method of data collection has the following benefits (*inter alia* Wellington, 2000):

- As in the case of the above, it is both cost- and time- effective to the researcher (although to a lesser degree than the postal survey).
- High response rate.
- A minimum of interviewer bias.
- The provision of necessary explanations (but not interpretation of the questions).
- Provision of support for respondents with under-developed literacy skills .
- A degree of personal contact.

Some disadvantages are:

- The presence of an ‘authority figure’ (the researcher; a teacher; anyone involved in administering the questionnaire in an ‘official’ capacity) may cause respondents to modify their responses.

- The possibility of contamination through copying, talking or asking questions.

These disadvantages were minimised by ensuring that the pupils were reassured that their responses were confidential, that they would not be 'marked' or 'assessed' in any way, and by the withdrawal of both the class teacher and the researcher to a background position in the room (so that pupils did not feel their responses were being monitored). In respect of potential 'contamination' of responses through discussion with each other, it was felt that there was an advantage in allowing pupils to talk to each other about their answers in order to refresh their memory of the stories (the storytelling event had taken place two weeks before the data collection) that outweighed any potential disadvantages.

The third questionnaire, in Part 5 of the study (the National Survey) was electronically administered. This has many of the advantages and disadvantages associated with the postal questionnaire, but with the added advantages of potentially being able to reach a wider sample more quickly and cost-effectively, being easier and quicker to complete, and requiring little effort on the part of the respondents to return. The biggest disadvantage to this method is in reaching the target group. Strenuous efforts were made to overcome this by using various social media sites including *Facebook* and *Twitter* as well as teacher network sites such as *GLOW,* and by contacting LEAs and schools directly. A second potential disadvantage to using electronic media is the computer literacy of the target group. This was not of great concern in this instance, as all

teachers have a required standard of computer literacy, but account has to be taken of the fact that some teachers will be more likely to respond in this manner than others. Of potentially greater concern is the reliability of computer network systems in supporting the distribution of the questionnaire. By making the survey available over a period of time, it was anticipated that this last disadvantage could be minimised.

3.5.3 Use of checklists

Checklists were used to collect information in two ways during Part 2: the Angus Teacher Surveys/Student Observations and again in Part 5: the National Survey. The questionnaires which were the main data collection instrument in these parts of the study took the form of a checklist, and a further, simplified checklist was used by the students during the Student Observations.

In general terms, a checklist is a list of items or questions that respondents are asked to mark in some way rather than provide a full written response (Oppenheim, 1992). As with all methods of data collection, the use of checklists has both advantages and disadvantages.

Some advantages (*inter alia* Wellington, 2000) are:

- It is quick and easy for the respondent to complete.
- The data collected are constrained within the limits of the defined responses and therefore potentially more straightforward to collate.
- Low cost of data collection.
- Low cost of processing.

The checklist also has some disadvantages, which were addressed as follows:

- Although checklists can be time-consuming to prepare, it was felt that the time was well spent, and that this was offset by time saved on personal interviews.
- While a checklist may be open to misinterpretation by respondents, pilot studies were carried out in order to refine the wording and thus minimise this.
- In order to allow for the collection of atypical responses, each question included a section for responses other than those offered.
- The very ease of completing checklists may encourage less well-considered responses than might otherwise be the case.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

A mixed-method approach to data collection has been used during the course of this study.

3.6.1 PART 1: Storyteller/Teacher Interviews

Two group interviews were conducted, and these were done in order to attempt to establish a baseline as to the understanding respondents might have in respect of the notion of ‘story’ and its uses, and to attempt to preclude the narrowing of possible responses due to my own beliefs or preferences. In order to further widen the scope of the questionnaire, the opinions were sought, not only of primary class teachers, but also others who were interested in the use of story in an educational context with the intention of discovering if parties outside of

the teaching profession might have different perspectives or definitions that had not been considered.

The main purpose of these interviews was to focus on the meaning of the story phenomenon: to establish a common understanding of the term ‘story’. These interviews were also intended to identify the range of different types of ‘story’ experiences which might be addressed in the teacher survey which was to follow.

3.6.2 The Sample

The storytellers (n=12) were selected according to a purposive sample, on a non-probability basis. That is, they were drawn from a population that had been identified as having some experience of using story in a variety of contexts, including formal and informal educational settings. There was also a convenience element to this, since within the possible sample, I chose those who volunteered to take part. The purpose behind this part of the project was to consider some of the definitions and perceptions of stories and story use held by people who work with story, in order to broaden perspectives and feed these definitions into the later survey (Part 2).

This group was a self-selected sub-group drawn from a class of storytellers who were taking part in a storytelling course at Newbattle Abbey College near Edinburgh. The purpose of this course was to enhance and extend storytelling skills among professional and amateur storytellers, and it was advertised and open to anyone with an interest in this field. The course attracted education funding, and was run on a part-time basis, and could therefore be genuinely open to all comers. Having

said this, the very fact that this was a certificated course held in an educational establishment, might be expected to influence the personnel motivated to take part – and in practice this did prove to be the case.

Of the fifty-four participants in the course, twelve volunteered to be interviewed for the pilot study. These were participants with a particular interest in using story for educational aims, although they were drawn from a range of backgrounds – pre-school teachers and volunteer workers; bible workers; a play therapist; library workers; a literacy and communications worker; and an international development worker who was interested in using story as a means of communicating scientific ideas to non-literate communities in a meaningful way.

Within the group that was interviewed there were undoubtedly biases – having described to the whole cohort of storytellers the purpose of my study, the volunteers who came forward to be interviewed were all in some way connected to the general field of education (either formally or informally). Those storytellers who worked solely in performance or entertainment did not elect to take part in the study.

The second group (n=6) consisted of primary school teachers from early stages classes (P1-3) in a primary school in Angus. This school was chosen because some of the teachers were known to me professionally and it was hoped therefore that the discussion could be informal, open and frank.

The sample of teachers interviewed was selected on a similar basis – this was again a purposive, non-probability sample. In this instance, a

case could be made that it was a typical sample (it is certainly in no respect atypical).

3.6.3 Design

Each of the interviews took place in a group context, and both were semi-structured interviews. Wellington (2000) defined three degrees of structure in interview style, from completely unstructured to fully structured, and the table below summarises these.

Table 12. Styles of interviewing

Unstructured	**Semi-structured**	**Structured**
Some 'control' on both sides	More control by the interviewer	Most control by the interviewer
Very flexible	Flexible	Less flexible
Guided by the interviewee	Not completely pre-determined	Guided by researcher's pre-determined agenda
Direction unpredictable		More predictable
May be difficult to analyse		May provide easier framework for analysis

(Wellington, 2000, p.75)

Although the fully structured interview provides a degree of consistency which makes data analysis more straightforward, the inflexibility of this type of interview prevents interviewees from bringing new perspectives into the interview framework. It was important that the discussion was open enough to allow ideas to be presented which had not been previously considered, but at the same time there had to be some limitations set in order to prevent loss of focus. The completely

unstructured interview might potentially limit focus, and therefore the 'middle way', the semi-structured interview, offered the best of both worlds. This would allow participants the freedom to express their own ideas and to develop these in discussion. At the same time, it would not be so free-flowing as to make it difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from the data.

A 'narrative' approach was taken to the analysis of the data collected during the course of these interviews (Silverman, 2005), that is to say, the focus was not on individual units (or words) within the responses in a quasi-statistical way, but rather an attempt was made to understand that which was not always entirely explicit, and to do so by relating to the developing discussion as a whole event. Narrative approaches to data analysis refer to a 'narrated' reality, i.e. they accept the veracity of the interview data as presented by respondents and attempt to understand its 'situatedness'. The approach therefore focussed in the main on understanding and interpreting the interviewees ideas in a holistic way – by listening to *what* the interviewees were saying rather than *how* they were saying it. Robson (2002) refers to this as an 'immersion' approach, and he describes this approach as being the 'Least structured and most interpretive, emphasizing researcher insight, intuition and creativity' (Robson, 2002, p.458). Robson maintains that this approach to data analysis is difficult to reconcile with a scientific approach, and that it calls for expert knowledge and a degree of interpretation. However, this is not a 'scientific' study in a formal sense, and the researcher in this case (me) does have a degree of 'expert knowledge' of the field based on thirty years

of school and classroom experience. There will always be a danger of deficiency and bias where any interpretative approach to data analysis is taken, and it is important to acknowledge the possibility of these in order to attempt to counteract them. Some of the issues identified by Robson (*ibid*.) as potentially impacting on the quality of the data analysis are the timing of the recording of data; the transcription and/or annotation of data; selective attention – personal interests, experience and expectations can affect what the researcher pays attention to; selective encoding – not taking full account of information which has a modifying effect on anticipated outcomes; selective memory – the accuracy of notes is adversely affected where there is a significant time-lapse between collecting and collating data; interpersonal factors – interviewers may focus more on more welcoming interviewees, or with those whom they have a greater rapport.

While it is impossible to remove potential biases completely, recognition of these is the first step towards discounting them, and in an attempt to minimise bias, the potential negative effects mentioned above have been addressed in the following ways:

- Personal interests, experience and expectations which can affect what the researcher pays attention to: the principal way in which this was addressed was a mindfulness that this might occur, and ensuring that full attention was given to details mentioned by the participants which might have initially appeared insignificant or even contradictory.

- Selective encoding – not taking full account of information which has a modifying effect on anticipated outcomes: codes were not pre-determined before encoding the pupil and teacher statements: these were devised in response to content of the interviews. Thus the themes identified were those determined by the interviewees themselves.

- Selective memory – the accuracy of notes is adversely affected where there is a significant time-lapse between collecting and collating data: the notes were transcribed on the same day that they were recorded. They were transcribed by the interviewer .

- Interpersonal factors – this is a difficult one to gauge. The teacher interviews took place in a space of the teachers' own choosing, informal introductions were made with each teacher before the interview began, and efforts were made by me as interviewer to bond as a colleague. Recognition was made of the time-pressures on teaching staff, and thanks offered for the teachers' contribution to this project. Some discussion took place on how information derived from the interviews could be of value to others in the profession, so that the interviewees would feel they had contributed to a professionally worthwhile activity.

3.6.4 Measures

The interview schedules for both the storyteller interviews and the teacher interviews used in Part 1 of the study were the same. They were

designed to be as open as possible, while still providing a framework so that the discussion did not go off topic. The questions asked were:

- What is the context in which you use story?
- Why do you use story?
- What is a story?
- What kinds of stories do you use?
- How do you select stories?
- How do you tell if it has worked?

The questions were designed according to the following rationales:

Table 13. Storyteller/Teacher Interview Questions

Question	**Rationale**
• What is the context in which you use story?	To set the interviewees at ease, and to establish a context in which to interpret the responses offered.
• Why do you use story?	To encourage the interviewees to share their own rationales for story use, which might be used in the design of the later questionnaire.
• What is a story?	To establish definitions which might be used in the design of the later questionnaire.
• What kinds of stories do you use?	To establish definitions and descriptions (including language used) which might be used in the design of the later questionnaire.
• How do you select stories?	To establish definitions which might be used in the design of the later questionnaire.
• How do you tell if it has worked?	To establish definitions which might be used in the design of the later questionnaire.

3.6.5 Procedure

Group interviews were chosen as being a less formal, and therefore potentially more enjoyable, experience for the participants. It was felt that this increased the likelihood that participants would agree to take part in the interviews. Other advantages of the group interview are that it is easy

to set up quickly, that the amount of data collected can be maximised by collecting from several people at once, and that (importantly) the participants may be stimulated and encouraged by each other's comments – thus adding to the richness of the data collected (Robson, 2002). A disadvantage of this type of interview is in collecting data from several interviewees simultaneously, and because of this, the interviews were recorded (with the consent of all those taking part), and later transcribed.

In the case of these interviews, the topic under discussion was neither sensitive nor in any way contentious, and therefore issues of confidentiality among group members was not an issue. Robson (2002) identifies further problematic issues arising from the group interview: he notes that it is difficult to generalise from focus groups. This part of the study focussed on a narrow sample of respondents (sample selection will be discussed later), and as such there was no expectation that the data collected would be externally generalizable, that is to say, statistically generalisable beyond the particular setting in which the interviews took place, although Robson does concede that theoretical generalisation is possible in instances such as these. It was hoped that it would be possible to develop insights from these interviews which might be transferrable to other (related) contexts within the study, for example, the teachers' survey.

Both sessions took the form of an open group interview, and each contained the same questions. In each case it was felt that the participants would be able to extend and refine their responses to the questions put to them in the light of an open discussion. In this way

definitions could be extended and the language used in the statements to be produced for the later survey could be refined.

Each session lasted approximately forty minutes, and was based on a series of open-ended questions (above). With the permission of the participants, the sessions were recorded to be transcribed at a later date: this was done to allow for a free-flowing discussion, and would allow full examination of the responses. The interviews were informal, and the participants had been asked to volunteer to take part, having had the rationale for the interview explained to them prior to the session.
A framework of questions was used, and the discussion was not interrupted or led, other than to seek clarification or to follow up on particular points made, although encouraging comments were offered and gestures such as smiles and nods made in order to try to promote a 'conversational' atmosphere which would allow ideas to flow.

3.6.6 PART 2: Angus Teacher Surveys/Student Observations

Although, as stated above, a constructivist approach to data collection and analysis was taken, use of some quantitative measures was made in the case of the teacher surveys and the student observations. In support of this mixed-method approach, Wellington (2000) assures us that the two approaches (that is, qualitative and quantitative) can complement each other. The information derived from the survey sets the scene for the later parts of the study, offering insights which informed the later interviews. Quantitative methods were introduced at this stage of the study in order to analyse the data derived from the large number of surveys completed.

Data were collected from teachers in relation to how they used story in their classrooms, and from initial teacher education students on work placements in schools on their observations of how teachers used story in their classrooms. Because of logistical pressures and to meet the needs of the students concerned in respect of the timing of the data collection, the two sets of data were collected at different times. The teacher surveys were collected by the beginning of April, 2009, and the student observations took place between late April and early June of the same year. It was not the intention of this study that the students were corroborating or monitoring specific teacher information, they were providing another perspective in order to offer some degree of ecological validity. Although this term has been the subject of some debate, and no clear consensus as to a definitive understanding of the term has emerged, Schmuckler (2001) notes that one premise of ecological validity involves 'maintaining the integrity of a real-life situation' (p.421). To this end, observational data were collected by the students in the course of their usual practice.

For the teacher survey, a questionnaire was selected as being a relatively simple and straightforward way to gather a large amount of information from as wide a sample as possible, and in a standardised format which would allow for comparison of results. There are advantages and disadvantages to this method, many of which are well documented (*inter alia* Silverman, 2005). The survey was administered by post, which facilitated distribution. Some of the disadvantages of this method of data collection, however, are that any misunderstanding of the questions

cannot be addressed (although in order to minimise this, a consultation exercise was carried out, see p.143), the low response rate, and the possibility of respondent bias. This latter might be anticipated in any self-administered survey, where it is likely that those respondents with the strongest views are the ones most likely to take the time to return the survey. Further, in the case of this particular survey (which was quite extensive and therefore time-consuming to complete), it might be anticipated that the respondents were those who were interested in (and therefore biased towards) the subject matter.

As a way of providing some degree of triangulation, a second instrument was designed to be used by student teachers who were on school experience placement in the Local Education Authority in which the study was taking place. This instrument took the form of a schedule for recording information on observation of practice, but the advantages and disadvantages were similar to the above. This was not distributed by post, but was sent by e-mail after an initial contact meeting and briefing with the students.

The survey and the observation schedules were designed to collect information which would describe the extent to which story is used in the Early Years' classroom, the types of stories used, the ways in which they are selected, and the modes in which they are presented, with the intention that they would illuminate teachers' aims for story use, and how far they believe it to be an effective teaching medium.

3.6.7 The Sample – Teacher Survey

The survey was sent out to all 55 Primary schools in Angus. This was a purposive sample selected because of its accessibility to me as a researcher, and because the Local Education Authority was willing to allow me to access schools in the area.

No claim is made that this sample was selected as being 'representative' of the population of Scottish Primary Schools, however, the information that follows offers a picture of how the county of Angus compares to the Scottish National 'average'.

The county of Angus is in the east of Scotland, and was formerly (prior to 1928) known as Forfarshire (ScotlandsPlaces, undated). Between 1975 and 1996, it formed a district in the region of Tayside. The county town (the seat of local government) is Forfar. The population density of Angus is 0.5 per hectare, compared with the national average of 0.65 (Vergoulas, Lewis, and Jenki, 2003) . The population has an overwhelmingly white ethnicity (99.21% compared with 97.99% across the whole of Scotland), and a broadly average social spread compared to the rest of the country. The unemployment rate is 2% lower than the national average. The range of occupations in Angus is very similar to that across Scotland, but there are almost twice as many people employed in agriculture and fishing compared with the national average (although the numbers are small – 4.74% as against 2.51%). There are no major cities within Angus – the nearest city being Dundee (14 miles from the county town of Forfar), and therefore no schools which might be regarded as being 'inner city primaries'.

The average school roll of Scottish primary schools (Scottish Government, 2007) is 273 pupils, while the average Angus primary school has a population of 155 pupils. Only 10 of the 55 schools in Angus have a roll which matches the national average, some being larger, and most (34 of them) have a roll below 100.

The average number of pupils registered for free school meals (a statistic which is commonly used to indicate socio-economic status in school catchment areas) across Scotland as a whole is 16.7% (Scottish Government, 2009a), while the Angus schools for which statistics are available, show an average of 14.5% . There are twelve small schools in Angus with school rolls below 100 for which no data is available.

An overview of the county of Angus therefore shows it to have a fairly typical population density, ethnicity, social spread and unemployment rate. There are more agricultural workers in the county than average, but this number represents a minority of the population of both the county of Angus and Scotland as a whole. Average school size is smaller than elsewhere in the country, and slightly fewer children in Angus are recorded as being registered for free school meals.

In respect of the student observation group, this was a purposive sample selected from a group of postgraduate and third year undergraduate student teachers from the University of Dundee who were on school experience (work) placements in Angus. These students were approached because their school placements were based on the age and stage of the school (P1-3) on which the project focussed.

The unbalanced gender divide among Scottish primary teachers (most of whom are women), would suggest that most of the responses (the returned surveys were anonymous, so the proportions are not certain) were from women teachers and students. Approximately 90% of the population of students on the primary teaching courses at the University of Dundee is female. According to The Scottish Government (2009b), 75% of the teaching population in Scotland is female. This includes both primary and secondary teachers.

3.6.8 Design

A preliminary consultation with a group of teachers, from Dundee, was used to inform a series of questions about the use of story in the classroom: how and why it is used (if at all), as well as sources and types of story; who selects stories for classroom use and how this is done. The last question on the survey asks respondents to consider how they measure whether the story has met its purpose. The full questionnaire is attached in Appendix 4, p.414.

In order to refine the survey design, the group of Dundee teachers (above) was consulted in order to avoid contamination of the target group by giving them sight of the survey in advance of the study. This was a self-selected group from a local primary school – the teachers who took part volunteered to do so because they were interested in the subject matter. As well as looking at the content of the survey in respect of clarity of statements, the group was also asked to consider aspects of presentation such as layout, font, length and cover design.

The group of 8 teachers was given the survey two weeks before the discussion meeting so that they had time to examine it and to consider their responses. They were not asked in advance to consider any particular aspect, but to come to the meeting with their comments and questions. This was done so that the teachers were free to address aspects of the design which might not otherwise have been considered.

The teachers had all worked together at the same school for some time. The group met in an open discussion so that they could question and develop each other's' responses, and the discussion was recorded in order that their comments could be fully considered at a later date.

As a result of this consultation exercise, some alterations were made to the questionnaire. One of the statements was refined to clarify the intended meaning (the statement originally read 'sound stories made by teacher', this was later altered to 'sound-effect stories made by teacher (no words)', as one of the teachers in the discussion group was unfamiliar with the term 'sound story'). Examples were included under other statements in order to clarify meaning – the definition of 'music' was expanded to include both the playing of instruments and sound recordings; 'pictures taken from other sources' was exemplified by photos, posters and magazines; under 'electronic media', 'audio' was defined as including CD, tape and radio recordings; 'video' included television broadcasts, film and DVD; 'drama performed by pupils' was shown to include improvised drama and role play; the term 'traditional source' was explained as referring to myths and fairytales.

The layout of the questionnaire itself was discussed, and it was felt that the questions should be printed on both sides of the page. This made the survey appear less lengthy (and therefore less daunting), but also appealed to the teachers' concern about conserving paper – they felt that printing on one side of the page only was wasteful, and this coloured their attitude towards the survey itself. Teachers receiving the survey might easily, because of this initial negative impact, feel less inclined to respond.

The questionnaire was presented to the group in three different fonts – Times Roman (selected because it is a standard, default font), Comic Sans (selected because evidence drawn from experience suggests that this is a preferred font for use in primary school documents and therefore familiar to the teachers) and Arial (selected because it is recommended by IT experts as one of the most easily-read fonts). There was some discussion about this, with some teachers preferring Comic Sans, and others choosing Arial. Times Roman, it was felt, gave the document an off-putting quality – 'like an exam paper', in the words of one of the teachers consulted. In the end, after some further discussion with colleagues working in IT, Arial was selected.

There was some discussion about the length of the questionnaire – all those consulted felt that it was lengthy and therefore likely to be daunting. Once all those in the discussion group agreed that there were no sections which could be left out, it was decided that printing on both sides of the paper would at least give the questionnaire a shorter 'feel'. This aspect of the design of the questionnaire was further addressed by

shrinking the format from A4 to A5 – a decision which had to be weighed against the reduced legibility resulting from the smaller size of the text.

The discussion about cover design centred primarily on the colour of the paper to be used. Oppenheim (1992) notes that this can make an impression, and can affect respondents' attitudes towards the survey. The teachers in the discussion group all agreed that a coloured cover-paper would make the questionnaire stand out on the teacher's desk, and that it would be therefore less likely to become buried in a mountain of paper. There was no general agreement about which colour was more suitable, and yellow was settled on as being bright and inoffensive.

An alteration to the original design of the survey layout came about as a result of a comment from one of the teachers, who said that she felt that as the survey was about stories, it would be appropriate if its design reflected its contents. She felt that an attractive, storybook-like style of presentation would generate some goodwill on the part of the respondents, which might in turn encourage them to look at it more closely, and (hopefully) complete the survey. As a result of this, the layout was altered to look more like a storybook, with a picture on the front cover and a slightly whimsical title 'Tell Me A Story'. The author's name was added in the style of a book, and a light-hearted font used (Curlz). The first page of the survey, outlining its purpose, was written in the style of a children's story. The only other alteration made to the design was to add the University of Dundee logo on the inside cover in order to reassure the recipients of the survey's provenance.

Once the design of the survey layout had been addressed, the teachers' group was then asked to consider how returns might be optimised. Oppenheim (1992) suggests that offering incentives has a positive effect on the number of returns a researcher might expect from a survey, and the teachers asked agreed that this might have the desired effect. In order to appeal to the professionalism of the recipients of the survey, and to help balance any negative attitudes which might cause such an incentive to be viewed as a 'bribe', a pack of well-regarded children's books with DVDs was selected as the incentive, and a note on the survey requested that respondents wishing to be part of a 'draw' for these should include the name of their school and respond by a given date. Respondents were asked to reply with the name of their school rather than their own name in the hope that they might feel more inclined to reply if the reward were professionally beneficial.

The final aspect to be discussed was how the surveys should be sent to the schools in the target area, and returned. The primary motivation for considering these aspects of the presentation of the survey was to maximise returns. After much discussion, it was agreed that the following formula would be the most acceptable: a pack would be sent to each school in the target area (Angus), addressed to the Head Teacher, and containing:

- A covering letter to the Head Teacher, along with a copy of the questionnaire (for information only).
- A pack for each of the teachers in classes P1-3 containing a covering letter, the questionnaire, a Participant Information Sheet

(as required by the University of Dundee Ethics Committee), and a stamped addressed envelope for the return of the completed questionnaire.

Approval had previously been sought and granted from Angus Council to undertake this study in their schools. Two weeks before the survey was sent out to Angus schools, a short article was submitted to Angus Matters, the Angus Schools' newsletter, outlining the survey and asking teachers to take part. One week before the survey was sent out, schools were emailed, alerting them to the fact that the surveys were on their way. One week before the closing date for the 'prize draw', schools were reminded (by email) of the closing date, and after that date a final email was sent to schools thanking them for taking part, naming the 'winning school' (which had already been telephoned to that effect), and also asking that any remaining surveys be returned, as the responses would still be collated.

A total of 156 questionnaires was sent out to 55 schools, addressed to teachers of P1-3, along with a copy of the questionnaire and covering letter for the Head Teacher.

3.6.9 Measures

The content of the survey was informed by both the preliminary discussions reported above and the discussions held during Storytellers' Interview in Part 1 of the study. These groups offered a variety of definitions with regard to the way stories might be presented, including purely visual and aural (music, sound-effects) as well as oral stories, drama, dance and puppets. They also noted their various reasons for

using stories – for entertainment; to explore emotional issues; for curricular aims (in the case of teachers or those involved with a particular educational programme such as the Bible Alive project); to promote general educational goals such as an interest in books in literature or language development and thinking skills, creativity and imagination; to promote an understanding of society and culture, and to provide a social bond within the group of listeners. As a result of these discussions (with both the teachers' group and the storytellers' group), a set of seven sections were drawn up to be included in the survey/questionnaire (see Appendix 4, p.414) and this was sent out to teachers in the target schools. These sections were:

1. *How* stories are used in the classroom , including:
    - *Oral*
    - *Aural*
    - *Visual*
    - *Electronic*
    - *Drama*
    - *Dance*
    - *Puppets*
2. The *sources* of the stories used by either teachers or pupils.
3. *Why* stories are used in the classroom.
4. The *genres* of stories used.
5. *Who selects* the stories used in the classroom
6. *How* stories are selected for classroom use
7. How teachers judge whether the story has met its purpose

Each of these sections contained statements provided by either the teachers during the preliminary consultation or the storytellers during the Storytellers' Interviews in Part 1. There was an opportunity provided under each heading to add any other information or definition which may not have been included.

3.6.10 Procedure

In order to collect information from as many teachers as possible, the survey was administered by post. This had the benefit of allowing respondents to remain anonymous, thus freeing them to be open in their responses. Additional benefits to this way of collecting data are that it allows respondents to reply at their own convenience, and at a time and place of their own choosing; the cost of conducting this type of survey is relatively low compared with, for example, individual interviews; and it allows the respondents time to consider their responses. There are negative aspects to the use of survey, particularly the difficulties associated with encouraging potential respondents to reply (see discussion below on how this issue was addressed). It is easier for respondents to simply avoid replying than to say 'no' to an interviewer. There is also the potential for respondent bias. It might be safe to assume a greater likelihood that respondents with a positive attitude towards the project or towards the use of story in the classroom would reply to the survey. In addition there is the problem that as the interviewer is not present, it is not possible to offer clarification on any of the questions (and

it was for this reason in particular that feedback on the survey was sought before producing the final draft to be sent out).

3.6.11 The Sample - Student Observations

The sample consists of 14 teachers in Angus primary schools, whose practice was observed by students from the third year of the four-year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) course, and from the final work placement of the one-year post-graduate primary teaching (P.G.D.E.) course at the University of Dundee in 2010. Both of these are Initial Teacher Education courses. As these students would be in the classrooms as part of their normal teaching practice, it was hoped that this would reduce the potential problems associated with introducing an unfamiliar adult into the classroom. The students had no vested interest in the study, and could therefore be impartial in the collection of data. The students collect various samples of information about the class, both in respect of the individuals within it and of the pattern of work as part of their usual practice, and it was hoped that the targets would be less likely to alter their behaviour in the presence of the students as they became accustomed to each other. Wellington (2000) describes this as ‘participant observation’ and places it on a ‘spectrum of observation’ running from ‘complete participant’ to ‘complete observer’ (*ibid.* p.93). As a side-benefit to the students themselves, taking part in this project would further their experience of collecting data from observations, and give them an authentic context for doing so.

3.6.12 Design

To support the information gathered from the teachers' survey, data were gathered by student teachers based on observations of the same target group. It was hoped that this would have the effect of either validating the teachers' responses, or providing supplementary information which would stimulate further discussion. The gathering of observational data over a period of time can be labour-intensive, time-consuming, and potentially open to bias. There is a possibility that the researcher, if he has a vested interest in a particular result, will interpret the findings in a way which matches his expectations. The introduction into the classroom of an unfamiliar party in the person of a researcher might also affect the usual pattern of behaviour in a variety of ways – pupils may be self-conscious, or they may 'show-off'. The teacher may adapt her way of working in the knowledge that she is being observed. Wellington (2000, p. 41) calls this the 'Education Uncertainty Principle' – the presence of the researcher affects what is being researched. In order to address these potential issues, research assistance was enrolled from student teachers who were due to visit Angus schools on Early Years' work placements as part of the normal structure of their course.

The instrument was produced to allow the observation to be systematic (Wellington, 2000), and also to make the task as manageable as possible for the participating students. It was important that the data collection should not add in any substantial way to their workloads, as this might have a detrimental effect on their ability to meet the requirements of their placements.

A further consideration was that the students should be able to complete the schedules in as objective a fashion as possible, and so the design had to minimise the need for the students to make decisions or judgements about the information they were collecting.

3.6.13 Measures

As the data were being collected with the intention that it should support that already collected from the teachers, the statements against which the students were asked to collect data were matched to those already responded to by the teachers – for example, students were asked to collect information under the categories ‘story read by teacher’, ‘story read by pupils’, which were exactly matched to statements in the teacher survey. Other statements were condensed versions of those in the teacher survey (see below). Some of the statements in the original surveys sent to the teachers required subjective responses (those statements concerned with the teachers’ intentions for the story), and these were therefore omitted. The statements included in the student observation schedules required them only to record that which they saw, without the need for further analysis or reflection.

Several of the reporting categories were condensed in order to minimise the number of criteria against which the students were to collect data – for example, Section 2 of the teacher survey included questions about how stories are used in the classroom, offering choices which include oral/aural/visual/electronic media (and these are broken down into further sub-categories). In the student observation schedule, the students

are simply asked to record whether the story is read by the teacher or the pupils, or whether each uses ‘other media’ to present the story.

3.6.14 Procedure

Both sets of students, as part of their Early Years’ course, had prior training and experience in gathering observational information in the classroom in order to inform their professional practice. Both groups had prior experience of using a variety of methods to do this, including the use of observation schedules. A total number of 34 students was approached (22 from the B.Ed. course and 12 from the P.G.D.E. course, this being the number of students at placement schools in Angus, the focal LEA). Of this number, 14 – slightly less than half – agreed to take part in the study. Each group was approached separately, and the project was outlined to them and the rationale for the observations explained. The students were advised that their participation in the project would be completely voluntary, as indeed would be the participation of the class teachers who were to be observed. During this information-sharing session, the students were shown a standardised observation instrument that had been drawn up to assist in the collection of data (Appendix 6, p424), details were shared about how this should be used, and any questions they had were answered. Those students wishing to take part were given a copy of the observation schedule, some explanatory notes, and information and permission sheets for all those involved in the study.

Further to ensuring that the students were not over-burdened by the observation task, they were asked to complete the schedule on a weekly basis, at a time when they are required by course commitments to reflect

on the classroom events of the past five days. Although this had the disadvantage of potential loss of data, as students may overlook, or forget, some of the information over the course of the week, it was decided that the advantage in terms of goodwill might encourage students to engage in the task. Both of the student groups taking part are reminded to make notes during the course of their week on placement to inform the weekly reflection as part of their ongoing coursework, and it was hoped that these notes might also serve as prompts when students came to report on the observation task.

The third year students were in schools for four weeks, while the post-graduate students were in schools for five weeks. There was no attempt made to balance the numbers of students from each of the two groups. It was not known at the outset how many students would eventually take part in the observation task, and this was left for the students to decide voluntarily, in consultation with the class teachers with whom they would be working.

3.6.15 PART 3: Dundee Primary School Story Sessions

In response to a request for a storyteller to visit the school on St Andrew's Day 2009, I agreed to tell some Scottish stories to three classes: p6, p6/7 and p7 in a local school. The school had been celebrating not only St. Andrew's Day, but were also marking the close of the Year of the Homecoming (a widely publicised series of events designed to attract people of Scottish ancestry to visit Scotland organised on behalf of the Scottish Government) by taking part in several in-school events to raise the pupils' awareness of Scots tradition and culture.

3.6.16 The Sample

This sample was selected to be part of the project because, as described elsewhere in this report, I had been approached by the school to work with the pupils and was able to collect responses from them after this event in respect of their ideas about the processes involved in storytelling.

The school is a local authority-run Roman Catholic primary school on the edge of Dundee. The school role is 224, and the uptake of free school meals (generally used as an indicator of the income and status of the families living in the area) is double the average for Dundee City, over three times the national average.

Three classes took part in this part of the study (P6, P6/7 and P7), with 20-25 children aged 10-11 years old in each. The classes were not matched in any way, and consisted of even numbers of boys and girls.

3.6.17 Design

The purpose of the data collection in Part 3 (November 2009) was to shed some light on how stories are received by the pupils – in order to compare teachers' intentions with outcomes for the pupils.

This part of the study was constrained in terms of time by the requirements of the school. Because of this constraint, a questionnaire was used, thus minimising the amount of disruption to the school day.

Five stories were selected (outlines of these stories are in Appendix 7, p.425):

- Whuppity Stoorie – a traditional story about a witch (very similar to the Rumpelstiltskin story)

- Tam Lin – a folk tale from the Scottish Borders about a young woman who falls in love with a fairy.
- The Silkie Wife – a tale based on the Silkie myths from Orkney and Shetland
- Scotland's Flag – a myth derived from an ancient historical event which purports to explain the derivation of the Scottish flag
- The Prince and the Puddock – a completely improvised story about a king, his three sons and a puddock (frog), which (loosely) took as its inspiration the well-known traditional fairytale of The Princess and the Frog.

The stories were randomly allocated to each class, and were told from memory (although in the case of the last story, it was made up as I went along to a basic framework). Table 14 below shows which stories were told in each class (the number of stories each class heard varied according to the length of the stories).

Table 14. Stories told listed by class

class	**stories**		
p6	The Prince and the Puddock		
p6/7	Scotland's Flag	Whuppity Stoorie	The Silkie Wife
p7	Scotland's Flag	Tam Lin	

In order to systematise the approach to analysing the data generated by the pupil surveys, a 'Framework' analysis (*inter alia* Ritchie and Spencer, 1994; Srivistava and Thomson, 2009) was applied to the

responses generated by the pupils by identifying themes in the ways they referred to stories. This was done in order to categorise story elements which appeared to be significant.

'Framework' analysis has five stages (Ritchie and Spencer, p.178) – familiarisation, identification of a thematic framework, indexing, charting, and interpretation. These were used as noted below:

Familiarisation

Reviewing, transcribing, reading and re-reading the data in order to gain a clear overview of the material gathered

Identification of a thematic framework

Noting recurrent themes and issues which emerged during the course of the pupils' discussion.

Indexing

The framework identified was then applied to the data. Statements made by the pupils were coded and indexed (Appendix 5, p.419).

Charting

This involved removing data from their original context and rearranging it according to its appropriate thematic reference.

Interpretation

Once the data from each school was charted according to core themes, the data set as a whole was then interpreted by searching for patterns and connections in order to provide responses to the research question.

This process offers the researcher a method for the systematic organisation of qualitative data which may, superficially, appear disordered.

3.6.18 Measures

The intention of this part of the study was to find out how far the pupils were engaged by the stories, whether the stories themselves met the learning aims that had been set for them, and whether the pupils derived any incidental learning from the event.

The aims (or the intended learning outcomes) identified for the stories, and defined by the storyteller, were socio-cultural, knowledge, personal and social, creative, language and literature and entertainment/enjoyment. See Appendix 8, p.427, for how these were ascribed to the individual stories.

The questions asked, and their relationship to the intentions listed above is indicated in Table 15 below:

Table 15. Dundee Story Sessions Questions

Question	**Intention**
Which story did you hear?	Pupil engagement (simple recall)
Did you like it?	Pupil engagement (personal evaluation)
What was it about?	Pupil engagement (recall)
Did you learn anything? If so, what?	Pupil understanding (analysis)
Any other comments?	Opportunity for expansion

3.6.19 Procedure

I was introduced to the classes as 'a visiting storyteller', as I did not want the children to feel that this was a 'lesson'. This was done so they would engage with the stories at face-value, and would not feel that they had to attend to them in any particular way (that is, they were not advised that they would have any follow-up work based on the stories, so there was no requirement on their part to note any particular aspect of the stories).

The stories were each told from memory rather than read from a book. After each story, the class was allowed a moment or two for comment but no questions were asked in respect of the stories. Each session lasted about an hour, and the classes heard one, two or three stories, depending on how long each one took to tell. In the cases where the class heard more than one story, this was in response to a request for another, so long as there was time. The story sessions ran in each case until the bell rang for a class break. The class teacher remained in the class throughout the sessions, and listened without comment.

The children showed their engagement in the stories by their listening attentively, by requesting further stories, and by making appropriate comments after hearing the stories, for example, noting points made in the story, or commenting on how the events of the story related to their own experience. One example of this was when one girl freely offered a clear link between her own experience and one of the themes in the story of Tam Lin (this incident is described in more detail below). In other cases, pupils were reminded of stories they had heard elsewhere (for example, about St Andrew), and they made links to other areas of knowledge (for example, to the geography of the Scottish Islands, to Scots language learning, and to Christian teaching), there was some discussion about a reference made in one story to the Google search engine (a deliberate anomaly mentioned as a joking aside), which generated some debate.

At the convenience of the school, I returned two weeks after the story sessions with a short questionnaire (Appendix 9, p.429) for each child. Appropriate permission had been sought from the school to do this, and the children were advised that the completion of the questionnaire was not compulsory, although all children present at the time elected to complete it. The children were also advised that their responses would be completely anonymous, and that they would not be assessed (marked) in any way, so they could feel free to respond as they wished. They were told that handwriting, spelling, and sentence construction would be disregarded in their responses as I did not wish to inhibit their answers.

The children were told that where they had heard more than one story, they could list their responses to each separately on the page.

The questionnaire was personally administered, thus assuring a 100% return rate, and the questionnaire was completed by the respondents in one short session. I was able to speak to the respondents and address any misunderstandings about the questions or the way the questionnaires should be completed (this was a valuable support mechanism given that the respondents were children), and the questions were read aloud to the respondents, bypassing any potential difficulties about readability.

The questionnaires were completed in social groups within the classroom situation, and so the respondents were able to discuss their answers with each other – both an advantage and a disadvantage (advantages and disadvantages of a group-administered questionnaire are discussed fully in section 3.5.2, p.124 above). In respect of the data gathered in this part of the study, the issue of generalisablity has once again to be taken into consideration.

3.6.20 PART 4: Angus Schools' Pupil and Teacher Interviews.

The aim of this part of the study is to further investigate the trends which were evident in the teacher questionnaires, and to compare teachers' ideas about story with those of pupils, with a view to attempting to establish a shared platform for classroom use.

3.6.21 The Sample

In order to facilitate data collection in the form of interviews, schools used in this part of the study had been contacted as previously in the

course of partnership work with Initial Teacher Education students on school work experience. This meant there was no need to arrange pre-visits in order to become acquainted with the children, or to explain the project to the teachers. It also meant that the children had prior knowledge of me as a familiar adult and would (it was hoped) be more comfortable in my presence than had we not met previously. It also increased the likelihood that the teachers approached would agree to be interviewed. This did prove to be the case, as not one of the teachers approached declined to be interviewed. It is possible that the teachers complied because of the 'authority' vested in me as a representative of the University of Dundee, and one who was there to assess students. It is also possible that the teachers wanted to share their experiences of practice in order to pass on their expertise (through the dissemination of the results of this study) to student teachers. Both information sheets and consent forms for distribution to the pupils were provided at the same time. Ensuring that paperwork sent to schools is actually passed on to the appropriate party is a recurrent problem in schools, and the personal delivery of this material circumvented this potential pitfall.

As noted previously, the sample of schools used in this study was selected, as were the other samples used, on a non-probability, convenience basis. The sample consisted of four schools, and the names of the participating schools have been changed in order to protect confidentiality:

1. Stevens Primary
2. Wallace Primary
3. North Eden Primary
4. Tana Primary

School 1, Stevens Primary School has a roll of 350 pupils, and 18.91 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers (Angus Council, 2009a). The uptake of free school meals in Steven Primary is 4.8% compared with a national average in 2009 of 12.8% (Scottish Government, 2009a) –a low figure, which indicates the high socio-economic status of the area. Thirty-seven pupils aged 5-6 in Primaries 1 and 2 (Reception and Year 1), and three teachers were interviewed. The teachers have been teaching for one, seven and twenty years.

School 2, Wallace Primary, has a roll of 260 pupils, and 17.2 FTE teachers. Wallace Primary has an uptake of free school meals of 38.3%, more than three times the national average, indicating a very different catchment area to that of Stevens Primary, above. Eighteen pupils aged 5-6 in Primaries 1 and 2, and two teachers of twenty-three and thirty years' experience, were interviewed.

School 3, North Eden primary, has 198 pupils and 13.5 FTE teachers. The uptake of free school meals in North Eden is 28% – more than double the national average. A total of thirty pupils in Primaries 1 and 2 aged 5-7 was interviewed, as well as their two teachers who had three and twenty-six years' teaching experience respectively.

School 4, Tana Primary, has 268 pupils and 15.3 FTE teachers and an uptake of free school meals of 14%. This school, therefore, is the 'best fit' in purely statistical terms to the national average (which would be a school with a roll of 200-300 pupils and 12.8% uptake of free school meals (Scottish Government, 2009a). Twenty-six pupils in Primaries 1 and 2 were interviewed. They were aged from 5-7. Three teachers were also interviewed, who had been teaching for one, fifteen and twenty-two years.

Table 16. Overview of sample schools (statistics)

DATA	**SCHOOL 1 STEVENS**	**SCHOOL 2 WALLACE**	**SCHOOL 3 NORTH EDEN**	**SCHOOL 4 TANA**
SCHOOL ROLL *(1)*	350	260	198	268
FTE*(1) (2)* TEACHERS	18.9	17.2	13.5	15.3
FREE SCHOOL MEALS UPTAKE *(1) (3)*	4.8%	38.3%	28%	14%
NO. PUPILS INTERVIEWED	37	18	30	26
AGE RANGE	5-6	5-6	5-7	5-6
STAGE *(4)*	P1&2	P1&2	P1&2	P1&2
NO. TEACHERS INTERVIEWED	3	2	2	3
TEACHER EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	1,7,20	23,30	3,26	1,5,22

Notes:

(1) Source: Angus Council (2009a)

(2) FTE : Full-time equivalent

(3) National average : 12.8% (used as an indicator of socio-economic status by government sources) Source: Scottish Government (2009a)

(4) Stage : P1=Reception; P2=Yr1

All children in the target classes had been given a letter describing the study, along with a permission slip to be returned by their guardians. Only those children who had returned the permission slip when I returned to conduct the interviews took part in the study. No reasons or explanations were sought for non-return of the permission slips, so it is not possible to tell whether the pupils who took part had discussed the project with their guardians, whether the permissions came from families with a particular interest in story, or whether the permissions not returned had even been delivered. Over all, twenty interviews were conducted, with one hundred and eleven pupils between the ages of five and seven interviewed in groups of five and six. The children were all in Primaries 1 and 2, and they were allocated to interview groups randomly by the teacher, and so neither age nor gender was taken into consideration – each group consisted of a random number of boys and girls, with no group showing a particular weighting towards either gender.

The interviews all took place in the first week of June – a detail which means that they had all had at least one full year of formal schooling. Ten teachers, all women, were interviewed. They had a range of teaching experience, with exactly half of that number having had more than twenty years' classroom experience. Two of the teachers interviewed were coming to the end of their first (N.Q.T.) year of teaching after entering the profession.

3.6.22 Design

Both the pupil and the teacher interviews were respondent interviews (Powney and Watts, 1987; Robson, 2002), and even though

they were not highly structured, they were under the control and guidance of the interviewer (as opposed to being completely free-flowing *informant* interviews where the interviewer facilitates the interviewee in expressing whatever he wants to say). The interviews were digitally recorded using an audio device with the consent of all parties, and transcribed later so that an accurate record could be made of the conversation, and so the interviewees would not be distracted by the taking of written notes at the time. Further, the need to take written notes would have interrupted the normal flow of question and answer. It is possible that the presence of an audio recording device might be considered by some to be intrusive, but on balance, it was felt that this disadvantage was outweighed by the advantages, particularly in the case of the pupil interviews, which were conducted in small groups, and where the presence of the audio device might be either quickly forgotten, or might provide some novelty value for the pupils. This did prove to be the case, and the children asked on several occasions to hear their recorded voices played back to them. I was happy to comply, not only to encourage their participation, but also as a means of reassuring them of the accuracy of the data collected.

Although the children were interested in the recording device for the first few minutes, the novelty soon wore off, and they appeared to forget that it was there. I was careful not to adjust it or move it so no further attention was drawn to the device until after the interviews were over.

The advantages of using interviews to collect this data are that they allow the interviewees to say what they think, and to respond with spontaneity and depth. There are further advantages that the interview

format provides in the opportunity to address any possible misunderstandings, and to probe interviewees in respect of unclear or unanticipated responses.

The time-consuming nature of the interview process is a disadvantage as it limits the number of respondents it is possible to reach within a given time-frame, and the transcription of interview data is an additional challenge. Not only is it time-consuming, but it can be difficult to distinguish voices where several respondents are speaking at the same time especially in the case of young children's voices where lack of clarity sometimes impedes accurate transcription. Every effort was made, where there was uncertainty about what had been said, not to make assumptions, but rather to indicate that uncertainty in the written transcript (see example in Appendix 10, p.430). It was to my advantage that I had been the only interviewer and therefore did not have to rely on the interpretation of others. This does mean that there is a degree of subjectivity in the analysis, but as noted above, the advantages of this outweigh the disadvantages. Further, each interview was transcribed on the same day that the interviews took place, so that memory of the interview was as accurate as possible. Although the disadvantages inherent in the group nature of the pupil interviews were taken into consideration (see section 3.3.1, p.120) it was important to ensure that the pupils were comfortable with the process and not subject to any undue stress. The main justification for conducting group interviews with pupils was that the young age of the interviewees required some special ethical consideration. Oppenheim (1992) points out that a basic ethical principle

governing data collection is that interviewees should not be harmed or upset by the process. The pupil interviews were therefore conducted in groups in order to ensure that the young interviewees were not subject to any undue stress which might have been the case had they been interviewed individually. Powney and Watts (1987) discuss at some length the issues impacting on interviews with vulnerable groups – and this would include children – including power relationships, internal pressures (for example, the desire on the part of the interviewees not to lose face) and the influence of the peer group on the responses given. Other advantages (and disadvantages) to these group interviews were similar to those noted in the discussion on the methods used in Part 1: The Storyteller/Teacher Interviews.

The teacher interviews were carried out on a one-to-one basis, and they were semi-structured in order to allow for a degree of discussion that would not be completely subject to my own constructs, which might be the case had the interview questions been formalised.

Although all of the potential advantages of the group interview were taken into consideration, there were no more than three teachers in any of the schools involved in this part of the study. Therefore, the advantages of focus group interviews noted in Chapter Three were minimised, and outweighed by other considerations such as the difficulty of co-ordinating interview times. The one-to-one interviews also allowed me develop a greater rapport with the individual respondents, and to probe an individual teacher's response in more depth than would have been appropriate in a

group situation where an individual might possibly have felt uncomfortable at being singled out in the presence of others.

3.6.23 Measures

The interview schedules for both the pupil and the teacher interviews (see Appendices 11 and 12, pp.432-433) were designed to explore attitudes and opinions, rather than facts. As such (with the exception of the opening questions), the questions used were open rather than closed questions. Open questions offer the opportunity for free response, that is, they have to be answered in full, and no choices or alternatives are offered (Oppenheim, 1992), whereas closed questions typically offer a limited choice of replies *(ibid.).* The main advantage to using open questions is that the interviewees are free to respond in any way they choose. Although a potential disadvantage to this is that the interviewer may misinterpret the response, probes or follow-up questions can be used to amplify or clarify. Oppenheim warns, however, that probes increase the possibility of interviewer bias, and the phrasing of these has to be carefully constructed so as to avoid 'leading' the respondent to answer in a particular way. This was taken into consideration in the construction of the questions. For example, when asking a child to expand on a response, I asked 'Why?' and repeated the statement they had made, for example, *P – My favourite is the duck book. Me – Why do you like the duck book?* Another tactic used to encourage the pupils to expand on a response was to say 'Tell me about that.'

Each of the sets of interview schedules was designed with simple, factually-based questions as 'openers' in an attempt to break the ice, and

to put the interviewees at ease with questions which were easy to answer. I asked the children how old they were, and if they liked listening to stories in the classroom, while the teachers were asked how long they had been in the profession, which stage group they were teaching, and if they had always taught that age group. The questions were then ordered in a hierarchy according to the amount of consideration required to answer them, with questions which were based on increasing levels of opinion rather than fact coming later in the interview (Oppenheim, 1992).

The interview schedules for both groups, pupils and teachers, were designed to address similar issues (the full schedules, with suggestions for prompts, are in Appendices 11 and 12, pp.432 and 433).

Table 17. Interview schedules

Question (pupils)	Question (teachers)	Rationale
• How old are you? • Do you like to listen to stories in the classroom?	• At what stage you are currently teaching? • Have you always worked with this age group? • How long have you been in the teaching profession? • Do you use stories in your classroom?	To set the interviewees at ease, and to establish a context for the interview.
• What is your favourite story? • Why do you like it?	• How would you define 'story'?	To encourage interviewees to think more closely about story forms, and to establish whether definitions are limited to particular media.
• What kinds of things make a story good? • Are there any kinds of stories you don't like? • What do you think makes a story not so good?	• What would you say in your experience makes a 'good' story for use in the classroom? • What kinds of factors are you looking for? Can you give me any examples? • Do these criteria ever vary? • What kinds of factors do you take into account when you are choosing a story?	To investigate teachers' and pupils' awareness of the factors that impact on story selection.
• Are some people (or some teachers) better at telling stories than others? Do you know anyone who is good at telling stories? What do they do? • Do you know anyone who isn't good at telling stories? Why not? What do they do?	• What advice would you give students or inexperienced teachers when choosing stories for use in the classroom? • Is there any type of story you would suggest should be avoided for classroom use? • What advice would you give them for getting the best out of the stories they use? • Is there anything you would suggest students or inexperienced teachers should avoid doing when they use stories in the classroom?	To establish criteria which might be used to inform implications for future recommendations based on the study

The last question in each interview was 'Is there anything else you would like to add?' – a completely open question allowing interviewees freedom to respond in any way they might choose. In the event, none of the children elected to respond to this final question no matter how it was phrased, and there may have been two issues here: firstly, the question

was *too* open for the age of children at whom it was directed, and secondly, by the time the interview was drawing to a close, the children simply wanted to leave. Although the teachers did respond to this question, none of them added anything that had not already been addressed elsewhere in the interview.

The wording of the questions was carefully considered. In wording the pupil questions, specific themes or examples were referred to first rather than requests for generalisations or opinions. This was done in order to focus the pupils' attention, but also to establish a clear context for their responses. The questions then became more general. Moving from the specific to the general is a well-established route in teaching, which recognises the child's prior knowledge and seeks to extend or refine this. This route is acknowledged in constructivist approaches to teaching and learning, where understanding is constructed in the light of previous experience (Lauritzen and Jaeger, 1997).

The wording of two of the questions was balanced to contrast with each other, 'What kinds of things make a story good?' and 'What do you think makes a story not so good?' The wording of these statements may appear clumsy, but it was carefully considered. There is a subtle difference between 'What makes a story good?' and 'What makes a good story?'. The first suggests there are attributes which can be applied to a story to make it good, that there are definite features which can enhance a story, and it was these I was seeking to establish. The second version of the question (which was not used) is slightly more ambiguous, and could be answered by offering the name of a particular story (for example, *The*

Cat in the Hat is a good story), by identifying a genre (for example, fairy stories are good), or in a variety of other ways. The oppositional statement, 'What do you think makes a story not so good?' also merits some explanation. The word 'less' was not used, as, based on my own experience of working with young children, the concept of 'more' or 'less' is not always firmly fixed in the understanding of children of this age: particularly in respect of an abstract notion such as 'good'. 'Less' is a comparative idea, and begs the question 'less than what?' Without a standard against which to measure it, the term 'less' becomes meaningless. Although 'not so good' is also comparative, it offers a binary opposite (good/not good) which is simpler for them to understand. The questions about the attributes of a good storyteller also began with something the children knew (that is, someone who is good/not good at telling stories) and moved on to an analytical question ('What do they do?') – although this question could just as easily be answered in a descriptive way by the pupils, allowing them to respond at a level which suits best.

The teacher questions were not so difficult to formulate. The same pattern was used – from simple to more considered questions. The main consideration in the wording of the teacher questions was to focus the respondents on experiential answers rather than conjectural ones. This meant more confidence could be attributed to the proposition that the answers were based on what the teachers actually thought rather than what they believed they ought to say.

A further consideration in the wording of the teacher questions was to appeal to their sense of expertise and professionalism by using words

like ‘experience’ and ‘advice’ in referring to them, and ‘students’ and ‘inexperienced teachers’ in reference to a potential (unseen) audience. That way they did not need to be self-effacing about their expertise, or put in a position where they might feel they were being immodest about it.

3.6.24 Procedure

Each class which was to take part in the study was visited during the course of my work as a school experience tutor supervising students on the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) course at the University of Dundee. These students were on the final school placement of their course, and were not part of this study in any formal sense. Their presence in the schools, however, provided an opportunity for contact with the teachers who later took part in the study, to request their and the pupils’ participation, and to leave the relevant information and paperwork, including letters requesting parental consent for pupil participation.

Pupils in Scottish schools – especially those schools within easy travelling distance of initial teacher education establishments – are even at this early stage in their schooling acquainted with the ‘tutor visit’ to student teachers in their schools, and this was therefore nothing out of the ordinary. It did mean, however, that on the return visit, to carry out the interviews, reference was made back to our previous meeting.
This meant that not only was I a familiar adult, but also that the pupils were aware of my working relationship with teachers in training without having to go into any further explanation.

The interviews with both pupils and teachers took place between one and two weeks after the initial contact, and were arranged completely at the convenience of the schools. The children were interviewed in the morning, and the interviews took place in each case in a classroom near to the pupils' own rooms. The reason for removing the pupils from their own classroom was to facilitate the audibility of the discussion: young children's voices are often light and it can be difficult to hear clearly (and record) what they are saying.

Each session began with an informal chat, during which the children were reminded of my last visit, and an explanation was offered about the purpose of the interview. The children had an opportunity to examine the voice recorder and they experimented with it, passing it around and recording and playing back their voices. It was then explained that they did not have to take part unless they wanted to, and were free to answer the questions or not, or to leave the interview whenever they wished. During the course of the interviews, I tried to be alert to non-verbal signals from the pupils when deciding when to move on to the next question, or indeed when to draw the session to a close. This was especially important due to the imbalanced power relationship between interviewer and interviewees: children (especially in a primary school environment, and especially in the Scottish school system) are expected to respond to adults' questions as fully and politely as possible: they are highly unlikely in these circumstances to refuse to answer a question, or to request the termination of the interview (Bell and Osbourne, 1981, and Powney and Watts, 1987).

The kinds of signals taken to indicate lack of interest, tiredness, or irritation with the line of questioning were based on my own experience as a primary school teacher, and included:

- vague, or incomplete answers
- changing the subject
- looking out of the window, or attention drifting (based on direction of gaze)
- signs of physical discomfort, for example, fidgeting, wriggling
- lack of eye contact
- seeking verbal reassurance or support from peers

These are the antitheses of the Child Involvement Signals identified by the Leuven Scale (Laevers, 1994).

After the interviews, part of the recording was played back to the pupils so they could confirm that it was accurate. The whole recording was not replayed as this would have been too time-consuming.

Each of the teachers in this part of the study was interviewed during her lunch break on the same day that the pupils were interviewed. In each case, the teacher was interviewed after the pupils. The interviews took place in the teachers' own classrooms, and with their individual permissions, were recorded for later transcription.

The transcripts of the interviews were sent to the teachers for confirmation of their accuracy, and to establish respondent validity. One of

the teachers requested an alteration be made to the transcript of her interview, and this presented an ethical dilemma which is discussed in Chapter Six.

3.6.25 PART 5: National Survey.

The national survey was designed to extend the findings from Part 2 of the study (the Angus teacher survey) and to provide data derived from a wider sample of teachers from across the country. This part of the study took place in March 2012. In order to gather information from a wide sample of the national primary teaching population, a questionnaire-based survey was used. The advantages and disadvantages of this method are discussed in section 3.5.2 p.124.

3.6.26 The Sample

There are 32 Local Education Authorities in Scotland, and 2121 primary schools (Scottish Government, 2011). These Local Education Authorities range in size from 18 schools (Clackmannanshire) to 172 (Highland Region). There were 23,160 primary teachers in Local Authority schools *(ibid.)* when data were recorded on 11th June, 2011. This number includes non-teaching Head Teachers, specialist teachers and supply teachers. The sample represented by this study (n=728 teachers) covers all but one of the 32 local authorities. See Appendix 19, p.454, for the complete table of results. On initial contact, Inverclyde Council declined to support the study and an attempt was made to follow up this decision, but after that no further contact was made with Inverclyde schools. Inverclyde is one of the smaller LEAs in Scotland, with 21 primary schools. It was hoped that individual teachers from this authority would respond to the

survey via alternative routes (through external websites, blogs, tweets etc.), but this did not prove to be the case.

3.6.27 Design

This wider, national, survey was administered electronically using the *Bristol Online Surveys (BOS)* software package, and was designed to address a number of needs in the following ways:

- An electronic survey could reach a wider sample of respondents than a postal one, as this could be centrally accessed via internet portals such as *GLOW* (the national educational intranet system supported by Education Scotland), websites (e.g. Education Scotland, the Scottish Storytelling Centre) and links to the survey could be distributed by LEAs, individual schools, etc.
- An electronic survey is cheap to design and to distribute.
- Data analysis is facilitated by software supporting the electronic survey itself, for example, by providing descriptive statistics; by enabling the key file to be used as syntax input in the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS);* and by facilitating the importation of survey data into other software packages such as *Excel.*
- An electronic survey is quick and easy to complete, and to return.
- Since the earlier survey was administered, the national education intranet system *GLOW* has increased both in popularity and accessibility, with all Scottish teachers currently having access (this was not the case when the earlier, local, teachers' survey was administered), and there has been a significant rise in internet use

by individual teachers. Some LEAs (Dundee City Council, for example) recommend daily log-on by all staff members, thus increasing the likelihood of information shared electronically reaching its target audience.

There are, however, disadvantages associated with an electronic survey. Although assurances were given that the link would be shared, this was impossible to monitor, given that each LEA has its own intranet system to which only employees have access. Furthermore, there are a variety of ways in which any one LEA (or other agency) might opt to share the electronic link – some more likely to elicit responses than others. For example, were a LEA to share the link to the survey in a printed newsletter, in order to complete the survey teachers would be required to enter the uniform resource locator (URL) on the address line in a web browser in order to access the survey. Although the syntax of the URL provided by BOS for this survey was very straightforward (http://www.survey.dundee.ac.uk/story), there is some effort required in remembering to complete a survey when it is no longer directly before you, recalling the exact syntax, and typing it in correctly. Where a LEA provides a link to the survey directly via a teacher's electronic mailbox, the survey can be accessed immediately by clicking the link: this requires little effort, and therefore potentially elicits a greater response rate. None of the LEAs contacted indicated how the link would be shared, neither were they asked to do this in any particular way.

A further disadvantage became evident during the course of the data collection process when one of the respondents contacted me to alert me to the fact that the software had ‘frozen’ during the completion of the survey, causing that respondent to abandon the questionnaire. On contacting the survey administrator, I was assured the survey package itself was operating effectively. This led to the conclusion that either the respondent’s hardware (computer) was faulty, or that the supporting software (the intranet system supporting the respondent’s web browser) was at fault. Occasionally when a system becomes overloaded it can cease to support the browser. This is one of a number of technical issues which could potentially impact on the data collection process and which are outwith the control of the researcher.

Feedback derived from the following sources was used to inform some modifications of the paper survey used in Part 2 (the Angus teacher survey) for the National Survey:

- Feedback from the original survey in the form of comments on returned questionnaires.
- A focus group study of six practitioners was conducted to report views on the suitability of the original questionnaire for use as an electronic survey.
- A pilot study of a revised version of the questionnaire was conducted in electronic format with a focus school.

A focus group was set up consisting of six teachers outwith the range of the survey (see below). The group was selected in this way in

order to prevent any discussion arising from their consideration of the questions influencing the data collected from the survey. This group consisted of two recently retired teachers, two teachers from independent schools, and two teachers who are no longer in the profession.

The feedback offered by this group, and which informed the design of the electronic survey, was that they felt the original survey was too long, and the range of responses offered was limited.

The first point raised was addressed by returning to the original data collected. Items that were selected by fewer than half the respondents were removed from the revised questionnaire. Items selected by more than half of the respondents were retained. Where an item was removed from the original questionnaire, it was subsumed into the category of 'other'. This would allow respondents to note uncategorised items (as 'other') should they so wish, while allowing the questionnaire itself to be shortened. The second point raised by the focus group was the one identified previously in the returned postal questionnaires.

For the purposes of the pilot exercise, respondents were also asked to comment on the length of time the survey took to compete, and a further comment box was added for any additional information. The revised survey was produced, as noted above, using the *Bristol Online Surveys* software (*www.survey.bris.ac.uk),* and shared under the title '*www.survey.dundee.ac.uk/story-pilot'.* The pilot survey included the University of Dundee logo to indicate its provenance, and an explanatory paragraph at the start of the survey clarified the aims and purposes.

The pilot study was completed by 11 of the 15 teachers in the target school (which had been one of the schools in the original Angus Teachers' Survey), none of whom were in their NQT year, and more than half of whom had been teaching for more than 15 years. These included one teacher from a pre-school class, one from P1, two from P2, three from P3, one from P4 one from a composite P6/7 class, and two from P7. No teachers from class P5 responded. These teachers took between three and fifteen minutes to complete the survey, with most completing the survey in five to ten minutes. In response to the request for other feedback it was suggested that the questions were clear, the use of subsections was useful, and the questionnaire was easy to follow. In the light of this, no further revisions were made to the survey.

3.6.29 Measures

Feedback from the original survey (Part 2: the Angus teachers' survey) indicated that a small number of respondents felt that the response range offered (often/rarely/never) was limited and did not allow for an accurate representation of their practice. This range was extended, and a six-point scale was used instead.

A decision was taken to omit the use of a middle response category as this was not an attitude scale, where a middle response would allow for a 'mild' or indefinite response style (Moors, 2008), but rather responses were based on reported practice. The six points used in the scale were defined as 0 = never and 5 = frequently, and this scale was repeated at the top of each page of the questionnaire to serve as an *aide-memoire*.

An additional question was added to the questionnaire in order to respond to the wider national audience being targeted by the research, and reflecting teachers' increased use of electronic media in support of resourcing the classroom. This question asked for more detailed information about the influences on teachers' story choices, listing sources such as *GLOW* and other portals and websites as well as more traditional sources (for example, professional recommendation and reading).

The final survey was produced, as was the pilot (see above), using the *Bristol Online Surveys* software (*www.survey.bris.ac.uk),* and shared under the title '*www.survey.dundee.ac.uk/story'.* Like the pilot survey, it included the University of Dundee logo to indicate its provenance, and explanatory paragraph at the start of the survey to clarify the aims and purposes.

3.6.30 Procedure

In order to reach the widest possible sample of the primary teaching population in Scotland, the survey was shared by providing an electronic link, along with a description of the project on the following websites:

- Education Scotland (the national body responsible for supporting quality and improvement in Scottish education) *(www.educationscotland.gov.uk)*
- GLOW (Scotland's national intranet for schools) *(https://portal.glowscotland.org.uk)*
- All Local Education Authorities in Scotland (except for Inverclyde, who had declined to offer the link to their staff)

In addition, links to the survey were also provided via the following, as a means of providing alternative routes into the questionnaire:

- The Scottish Storytelling Centre *(www.scottishstorytellingcentre.co.uk)*
- Scottish Youth Theatre *(www.scottishyouththeatre.org)*
- Storytelling Support Network (a teachers' resource network) *(http://storysupportnetwork.vpweb.co.uk)*
- The Literacy Adviser (Bill Boyd, an independent educational consultant who has links with both Education Scotland and the Scottish Qualifications Authority) *(http://literacyadviser.wordpress.com/)*

Further links were promoted through blogs on *TESS (Times Educational Supplement Scotland*), *Mumsnet* and *Facebook* postings, personal and corporate tweets and retweets. The survey was made available for a period of six weeks, during April and May 2012.

Responses to the survey were monitored during the data collection period, and after two weeks, it was noted that 16 of the 32 authorities had made fewer than ten responses (nine of these had a zero response rate at this time). Direct email contact was made at that point with individual schools in these authorities (Appendix 20, paper xv, p.470) reminding them about the survey. An electronic link to the survey was provided, along with a printable flyer outlining the project aims, and head teachers were asked to share this information with members of their teaching staff. Schools in Inverclyde were not contacted (see above).

At the end of one month, and two weeks before the close of the data collection, seven local authorities had returned fewer than ten responses, and a request was made by email to the education departments of these authorities to assist with the dissemination of the survey. At the same time, a reminder was sent to individual schools in these authorities (see Appendix 20, paper xv, p.470). Communications re National Survey). In order to comply with their earlier decision, Inverclyde was once again excluded from this contact.

3.7 GENERALISABILTY

This refers to the extent to which the findings are applicable outside the specific area of the study itself. Given that none of the five parts of this study is based on a representative sample, it can be said that it is not generalisable in any statistical sense. However, Robson (2002) outlines two alternative strategies for generalisablity, one of which, 'making a case' (*ibid*. p. 107) applies to this study. The thrust of this argument is that, while none of the groups studied during the course of this project is representative in a statistical sense, neither are the purposive samples unusual in any particular way and it is likely that similar groups of teachers and pupils may be found in schools across the country. In terms of the National Survey, the total teaching population was sampled. The potentiality for respondent bias is acknowledged: it is likely that an interest in the subject matter may have prompted response to the survey. This is further discussed on p.166. Guba and Lincoln (1989) argue that the idea of generalisability in social science research should be abandoned in

favour of transferability, and Connelly and Clandinin (1990) support this viewpoint, maintaining that the very notion of generalisablity itself belongs to a tradition created for other forms of research. They suggest 'apparency, verisimilitude, and transferability' (p.7) as more appropriate criteria. A further suggestion might be 'authenticity'. Although verisimilitude implies a degree of authenticity, the term is more redolent of 'truthfulness', whereas 'authenticity' carries with it reference to 'reality' (that is, the real experiences of the respondents as perceived and reported by them).

3.8 RELIABILITY

This refers to the consistency of the measures applied. According to Wellington (2000), social sciences research cannot achieve total reliability – social studies by their very nature cannot be exactly replicated.

However, he also suggests that current thinking is casting doubt on the possibility of total reliability and replicability in scientific research. The main threats to reliability outlined by Robson (2002) are participant error, participant bias, observer error, and observer bias. Steps have been taken throughout the study to minimise these, by piloting the questionnaires, for example, in order to ensure that the wording of the statements did not contribute to participant error, by holding a briefing meeting with the students who took part in the student observations, and providing them with guidance notes, so that a common understanding about how the survey was to be administered could be reached. In the case of all other parts of the project, participant error was minimised by the fact that there was only one researcher throughout (me), who was always present to

respond to misunderstandings where they arose. There is some inevitability about the possibility of participant bias throughout the study. It is likely that teachers with little or no interest in the use of story would also have little or no interest in responding to the research. In attempting to minimise this, the questionnaires were made to be as easily completed as possible, they were presented with clear instructions, and were designed to be attractive.

In line with a suggestion made by Oppenheim (1992), a small incentive was offered to teachers responding to the questionnaires. A similar strategy was used to incentivise the students taking part in the student observations. Whether or not these incentives had any impact on the teachers and students taking part is impossible to say without further investigation. The statistics would suggest not as the return rate of 34% would not be regarded as a higher than average one (Oppenheim, 1992).

A further source of participant bias might be found in the pupil responses. In the case of both the Dundee school sessions and the Angus pupil interviews, the pupils were aware of my interest in story. Pupils in schools often seek to please or help adults, especially in the case of visitors to their school, to whom they are encouraged to be polite. Other than being fully cognisant of this potentiality, and trying to minimise it by encouraging as free, open and informal a dialogue as possible with the pupils taking part at each stage, it is difficult to establish how far this impacts on the results of the research.

The last two threats to reliability noted by Robson (2002), observer error and observer bias, are potentially the most problematic. As there was

only one researcher throughout the whole project, there was always a danger of subjectivity, with no cross-checking of application of methods or of results. Further, my own predisposition towards the use of story in the classroom is almost certainly bound to influence both the way in which data are collected and interpreted. This has been acknowledged throughout the study, and while my awareness of this factor goes some way towards mitigating it, it cannot be completely discounted.

3.9 VALIDITY

Robson (2002) notes that there is no easy way of determining validity (the extent to which the data collection methods measure that which they set out to measure). Wellington (2000) also maintains that it is not possible to be one hundred per cent certain of validity, which may be externally or internally determined. External validity, according to both Robson and Wellington, corresponds to generalisablity, which is addressed above. Robson suggests that the simplest way to determine internal validity is to look for 'what seems reasonable, or *face validity*' (2002*,* p. 102), and Wellington poses the dilemma that we as researchers can only know reality by measuring it, but that we cannot know if our measurement corresponds to reality. We can only know if it corresponds to our own, internal, reality. He suggests that measurements may be regarded as being internally (as opposed to externally) valid if they are *authentic* representations of *some* reality [my italics].

Robson (2002, pp.105-6) outlines a series of potential ‘threats’ to internal validity, and maintains that if these are ruled out, then internal validity is established. Of the threats he describes, only two potentially apply to this study –

- selection (initial differences between groups prior to involvement in the enquiry)

- selection by ‘maturation interaction’ (predisposition of groups to grow apart): for example, groups which are initially matched may not remain so for the duration of the study. An example of this might be where a Primary 2 class is interviewed at the start of a study, and the resulting data is then compared with that gathered from a second Primary 2 class which is interviewed at a later date. The second group would typically be a little older than the first – how much older would depend on the time-lapse between the first round of interviews and the second.

In the case of the first threat, the groups were matched only very broadly (by school stage and geography) and this threat is therefore not completely discountable. There were differences between the groups of pupils, and these were based mainly on socio-economic factors which might have impacted differently on their attitudes and dispositions towards the use of stories.

In the case of the second threat, all data were collected either in one sweep, or over the course of one week. It is unlikely that the groups

encountered would have grown apart during this short period of time.

Other threats to validity noted by Robson (2002) which were discounted in relation to this study were concerned with data collected in the course of pre-/post-test studies, data collected over an extended period of time (which might yield results informed by factors unrelated to the study), rivalry among study groups, changes in instrumentation and drop-out rates during the course of the study. None of these factors impacted on the way the data were collected in this part of the study.

3.10 SOME CONSIDERATIONS OF WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Parts Three and Four of the study involved either questionnaire or interview sessions with pupils in schools. There are particular considerations that have to be taken into account when working with children – particularly in the context of a primary school classroom, and this section looks more closely at these, with particular reference to the interview sessions which took place in Angus schools.

3.10.1 Consent

In the course of interviewing pupils, there are several levels of consent that have to be obtained: from the Local Education Authority (LEA) to conduct research in its schools; from the Head Teacher of a school to allow the research to take place in her school; from the Class Teacher to allow the researcher to work with her class; and from parents to allow their children to take part in the project.

There is no requirement on the part of the LEA or the schools to seek consent from the pupils themselves, although contemporary ethical thinking would suggest that we should do so. Article 12 of *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1996-2007) declares that children have the right 'to express a view on all matters of concern to them, and to have that view taken seriously'. By *not* offering the child the opportunity to express a view, we deny the child his rights. It would seem, then, that in order to claim that respect for children's rights is consistent with the requirements of the *Convention*, the researcher should at the very least consult with the child.

Robson (2002, p.70) notes that there are issues about whether vulnerable groups, including young children, can realistically be regarded as being able to give informed consent. He says that young children may not really be in a position to fully appreciate what is involved. While this may be true to some extent, it is entirely possible to explain to participating children the purpose of the research in terms they will understand, and it is important that they should be given clear options to take part or not should they so wish.

However, given the possibility that child interviewees may regard the interviewer as being in a high-status position, or as being in a teacher-like role (see below), it may be the case that they are reluctant to decline to be interviewed, or to withdraw from an interview situation in case they are perceived to be 'un-cooperative'. Because of this, it is important that the interviewer should be sensitive to the non-verbal signals being given

by children in interview situations – for example, lack of eye-contact when speaking, mumbling or whispering, not joining in with group discussion, changing the subject. Any of these might be a sign that the child is less than comfortable with the situation and is a signal to the interviewer to allow the child to withdraw from the interview.

3.10.2 Attitudes towards the researcher/adult

There are power relationships to be taken account of between children and adults, particularly in school, where pupils are encouraged to co-operate with teachers and other members of staff. A visiting interviewer may be viewed by the children as a kind of teacher, and this is a clear possibility in this study, where I was introduced to the pupils by title and surname, rather than by first name; and had previously met them in my role as a teacher-tutor while visiting student teachers on school experience in their schools.

Bell and Osborne (1981) note that children may view the interviewer almost as a teacher in ‘disguise’. Pupils in school are trained to answer teachers’ questions, and to look for the ‘correct’ answer to teachers’ questions. Young children often seek to please the teacher by offering the answer they think the teacher wants. Powney and Watts (1987) warn the interviewer against being identified with the teacher, as this may influence pupils to offer the answers they think the interviewer wants, rather than what they really think. The interviewer should make stringent attempts to ensure that the relationship between the interviewer and interviewees is as equitable as possible, and to that end the

interviewer needs to consider the signals being given by appearance, non-verbal behaviour, language used and over all manner.

Powney and Watts (1987) discuss the impact of these aspects on the interviewer/interviewee relationship in terms of contact between adults, but there are further considerations to be taken into account when the interviewer is working with young children in terms of 'impression management' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.66). Appearance should be designed to promote a sense of approachability – while there is no suggestion that the interviewer should adopt a 'children's TV presenter' mode of dress (over-bright clothes, styled on the clothes children themselves wear), the interviewer should note that clothes are important signifiers of status, role, social class and value systems. It is no accident that many primary school teachers dress in a way that would be considered rather informal by other professionals. In presenting as an interviewer of young children there are several considerations that might be taken into account. The interviewer should try to avoid dressing in a way that would identify the interviewer as a teacher. This is difficult, as teachers vary enormously in their mode of dress. The simplest way to achieve this is to dress very casually, for example, in jeans or something similar (few primary school teachers in Scotland would dress in this way); avoid formal styles of dress/dark colours as these make the interviewer appear less approachable; avoid dressing in a way that shows allegiance to any particular group or 'tribe' (football colours, 'hippie'- style clothing, any kind of uniform).

Anecdotal evidence derived through discussion with colleagues suggests that young children are drawn to light colours, and to patterns and textures in clothing, and it might therefore be suggested that interviewers should dress in a manner that takes account of this. Other suggestions include the observation that wearing something attractive to the children (for example, jewellery, a bright scarf) is a very good 'ice-breaker', as they will often comment on this, and a friendly exchange can be established which is non-threatening and can set an equitable tone for the rest of the interview. Male primary school teachers achieve the same result by wearing brightly patterned ties, or especially modern trainers which might catch the children's eye.

Non-verbal behaviour should be designed to put the children at their ease. The D.E.S. document *Primary National Strategy – Classroom Communication* (2005) points out that some 55% of all communication relies on non-verbal signals, a further 38% on para-linguistic signals and only 7% on the actual words used (this will be further discussed below). Children will feel more comfortable with an interviewer who smiles and looks friendly. The interviewer should make good eye contact with the children when speaking directly to them, and should try to establish a seating position which encourages this: choosing a seat at the same level as the pupils rather than an adult-sized chair which raises the interviewer above the level of the children (and thus implies a raised status). In order to encourage a sense of inclusion, and so that all children in a group interview feel equally comfortable about taking part in the discussion, a small circle provides a very suitable environment for conducting the

interview – this is a common style of forum familiar to many primary school children.

The interviewer should try to adopt a mode of language use familiar to the children, and should avoid formal language or jargon. The interview schedule should be written in 'child-friendly' language, at a level the children will understand (see below), but further, the interviewer should be aware of 'para-linguistic' signals. These include accent, and tone and pitch of voice, and should be used in such a way as to help the interviewees feel at ease.

The over all manner of the interviewer should afford the pupil interviewees the same courtesies as would be extended to adults, for example, the interviewer should introduce himself by name; he should explain his purposes; he should enquire about the interviewees' physical comfort ('Do you mind if I open a window?'), etc.

3.10.3 Stress factors

Wragg (1984) notes that young children may feel intimidated by the interview situation. The interviewer should attempt to ensure that the interview takes place in familiar surroundings, and if practicable, in the company of others known to the child.

While there are undoubtedly drawbacks to group interviews – not least that some children may contribute more, or less, than others; some children may re-iterate responses given by others; conversational responses may develop which are not relevant to the interview – there are also advantages. The group interview provides a more relaxed, and more familiar, environment for the pupils. Cross-fertilisation among the

interviewees may allow the conversation to flow more freely, encouraging pupils to express their 'real' opinions, rather than those they feel the interviewer is looking for. In a group conversation, the interviewees are more likely to forget about the presence of recording equipment, where this is used, and answers can become less self-conscious. Where ideas are flowing more freely, the interviewees may be reminded of details they would otherwise omit to mention.

3.10.4 Linguistic and conceptual development

When interviewing young children, some attention has to be given to the language and thinking abilities of the interviewees. As well as phrasing the questions in a way which is meaningful to the children, care has to be taken not to be too persistent with a line of questioning as it has been shown that young children can have difficulty sustaining understanding in these circumstances (Lovell and Lawson, 1970). Powney and Watts (1987) warn against the dangers of either over- or under-estimating the interviewees' intellectual level by rash or premature intervention, or by leading the children's responses. They cite Piaget (1929) who also warned against talking too much, and thereby confusing the subjects with verbiage.

Fabian (1996) comments that young children may not be able to express their thoughts and feelings accurately because of the level of their linguistic development. She also hints that there is always the possibility of unreliability in children's responses due to children's sometimes fluid interpretation of the relationship between truth and words. Fabian (*ibid.)* goes on to note that young children may be unable to reflect beyond the

immediate, and may ‘only have developed affective impressions rather than opinions’ (1996, p.2). While this may be true to some extent, others would suggest that this concern is over-stated (*inter alia* Murris, 1992).

Murris (1992) also believes that children are more capable as thinkers than they are given credit for, and concludes that it can be the adult’s interpretation of what has been said that is flawed. An interviewer who is experienced in talking to young children and in actively listening to what is being said (rather than attempting to re-frame the dialogue in adult terms) should feel confident that the responses of young interviewees are being accurately represented in an interview situation. Further clarification can be sought by asking children, ‘What do you mean?’ Young children are rarely offended or put on their guard by this question in the way adults are, as it is a question they are used to asking themselves, and this was borne out in the interviews with children in classes P1 to 3, who were not at all disconcerted to be asked to clarify their responses on occasion.

3.10.5 Attention span

Young children can and will concentrate for long periods of time if they are engaged by the subject (one of the teachers in the interviews undertaken in Angus schools commented that often children in her class wanted her to read stories to them for much longer than she herself wished to do). However, once they have lost interest, they will show this quite clearly to a sensitive (and even a not-so-sensitive) interviewer. Once signs of disengagement become evident, the interview should be drawn to a close. If it is not, responses will tend to become more cursory and less

reliable as the interviewees attempt to find their own ways to end the discussion.

Signs that children are no longer engaged in the discussion can be physical. Children, who are less constrained than adults by social norms, may simply leave. Other signals of disengagement are fidgeting, looking away, and changing the subject of the discussion. In one of the interviews undertaken in this project, the children left the interview group gradually when they noticed other children playing outside nearby. As it would have been both counter-productive and unethical (the pupils had been informed at the outset of their right to withdraw at any time) for them to be required to stay until the end of the interview, this was accepted.

3.11 DISCUSSION ON APPROACHES USED

Conclusions drawn about the methodologies used in each of the five parts of the study are discussed below.

PART 1: The Storyteller/Teacher Interviews

The use of focus groups in both of these sets of interviews allowed for a non-threatening interview environment. Because of this, there was a natural flow to the discussions, and this in turn provided definitions, language and terminology that were useful in the production of the questionnaires used later in the study. The samples used in each of these interviews were self-selecting, and this led to some limitations on the type of data collected. As both sets of interviewees had an interest in the use of stories, they tended also to have a common understanding of what

stories are, and how they might be used. This perhaps led to narrower definitions being obtained than would otherwise have been the case.

PART 2: Angus Teacher Survey/Student Observations

The use of a postal survey seemed to be the best way to reach a wide number of respondents. In spite of my best efforts to maximise returns, a rate of only 34% was achieved. This could potentially have been improved by use of a personal survey, but this was not possible due to the time-constraints within which I was obliged to work. A personally-administered survey, or interviews, would also have lessened the potential for bias inherent in the process of self-selection of respondents in this survey. Wider dissemination of the questionnaire – to LEAs in other parts of Scotland – would have lessened the possibility that the perspectives of the teachers providing the data were limited by policies and practices within the Angus authority, and this conclusion led to the implementation of a national survey.

Few students took part in the student observations, and the results were based on only 14 returns (33% of sample). This low number of returns may have been a reflection of lack of student interest, it may have been because the students felt that taking part in the project was an unnecessary addition to their workload, or it may have been due to teachers declining permission to be observed. The use of observations of practice to support the questionnaire returns made by the teachers provides empirical evidence that adds a further dimension to the data, and is justified as such. To expect students to collect this information voluntarily was perhaps over-ambitious. The idea of employing a team of

researchers to collect this information was rejected as being very intrusive to the schools, the class teachers, the student teachers and the pupils. It was also considered that the introduction of unknown researchers into the classroom would have potentially undesirable effects on the outcome of the data collection as this would alter dramatically the usual pattern of classroom practice. A further alternative might have been to ask teachers to keep a log or diary. It was felt that this would not have provided the degree of objectivity provided by third-party observation. Another possible approach might have been to ask teachers to provide video evidence of practice. There are delicate ethical considerations associated with this, particularly in respect of filming children, and strict ethical guidelines are necessary if this type of approach is to be considered viable. Alongside this there are other considerations: the setting up of a video recording system requires time and equipment; the teachers may be less likely to agree to participate in this part of the study; this ‘fly on the wall’ approach sits less comfortably within this study than the simple recording of observations, as these are made against a clear set of criteria: the video camera captures everything in its sights irrespective of its relevance to the study. So, although the approach selected was less effective than would have been desirable, the alternatives considered did not provide an acceptable solution. For any future data collection of this type, it is concluded that a greater degree of preparation of parties involved would be necessary to encourage the student teachers to respond, and to address any issues or concerns that may have prevented a satisfactory degree of participation in this instance.

PART 3: Dundee School Sessions

In this part of the study, stories were selected in line the holistic requirements of the topic the children were studying at the time (Scottish language and culture). Were a similar investigation to be carried out in the future, the learning aims for each separate story should be more clearly defined, and the questions asked of the pupils more carefully matched to these, in order to be able to ascertain whether or not these aims were met.

PART 4: Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews

Focus group interviews (Barbour and Kitzinger,1999; Wellington, 2000) were used in the pupil interviews in order to minimise the stress on the pupils, to gather a lot of information in a short space of time, and to encourage discussion amongst the interviewees in order to allow ideas to flow more freely than might have been the case in individual interviews. There were unanticipated disadvantages to interpreting the data collected this way. A voice recorder was used to collect information rather than note- taking, for reasons outlined in Chapter Three. It was predicted that the transcription of comments where several children were talking at once might prove difficult. What was not foreseen was how similar the children's voices would sound when played back on the recorder. This meant that it was difficult to tell who had made each statement, which had implications for the comments about gender – it was not possible to tell whether a boy or girl had commented, and it was difficult to accurately interpret whether a comment such as 'I like boy stories' was a boy

endorsing the need for gender-differentiated stories, or a girl suggesting the opposite. It therefore became necessary to rely on memory of the discussion (a sound rationale for ensuring that the transcriptions were done on the day of the interviews). In the case of the gender comments, this was straightforward. A more difficult problem arose in respect of generalised comments. When played back, it was not possible to tell, for example, if one child had made a series of comments on one theme throughout the interview, or if several children had made the comments. Clearly, if the issue had been polarised, memory of the interview would have helped provide an accurate record of the discussion. It was not, and it did not. This led to the decision, when interpreting the data, not to focus on numbers of comments, as this might have been misleading. Instead, the degree of discussion generated was used as an indication of how important a particular theme was to the pupils. This was an interpretive approach as discussed in Chapter Three, but one that does have some theoretical foundation (Robson, 2002).

In using focus groups for the pupil interviews, it was hoped that members of each group would stimulate each other's' ideas. Although this did prove to be the case, account also had to be taken of the possibility that some pupils may have made comments they would perhaps not have done if interviewed separately. Whether due to peer influences, group dynamics, or a desire to 'please the interviewer', it is possible that some responses may not have accurately reflected the ideas of all the pupils who made them. This was a further mitigating factor in the ultimate

decision not to count the responses ascribed to each theme – that would not have given the most honest view of the results.

PART 5: National Survey

The decision to use an electronic survey was taken in an attempt to reach as wide a sample of the primary teaching population in Scotland as possible. This decision brought with it certain limitations: teachers attracted to completion of the survey would have to be comparatively computer-literate in order to access and complete the survey. This was not regarded as a significant barrier, as primary teachers in Scotland are required to be computer-literate. The issue remains, however, that some teachers are less well-disposed to computer-based activity than others. Additionally, the use of an electronic survey depends on the IT infrastructure supporting it. There can be no certainty that all schools were online at all times throughout the period of data collection. This was beyond the control of this project. The dissemination of links to the survey, and information about it, depended on variable degrees of support from LEAs, not only in terms of passing on links via email, but also in terms of LEA disposition towards the use of GLOW. It has to be acknowledged that some LEAs are very much more active in encouraging teachers to use this resource than others: in those cases, teachers would be more likely to have seen the survey information and link. Stringent attempts were made to disseminate survey information by other means, and access to this would be dependent on individual teacher disposition towards use of IT. A more effective way to ensure all teachers had access to the link

would have been by means of a mail-drop. All teachers have an email address, and if the survey could have been sent directly to individual teachers, this would have ensured all had equal access to it. This was not possible. In order to protect individual teachers' privacy, and to reduce SPAM, none of the LEAs approached would agree to share a list of teacher email addresses.

In addition to the limitations imposed by use of an electronic survey, acknowledgement has to be made of the fact that respondents to the survey were self-selected, i.e. they decided themselves whether or not to take part. This leads to the likelihood of bias in favour of story use, as it is likely that those teachers predisposed to the use of story are those who responded. The issue of self-selection is one that must be considered in respect of all data collection: even in cases where it is possible to ensure a representative sample, the degree to which any individual engages truthfully with the data collection instrument is subject to some variance. In the case of this study, this potential bias towards story use is acknowledged throughout.

3.12 SUMMARY

The ontology of the study is considered, and comparisons are made between positivist and relativist approaches. A third approach is postulated as being one on which this study is based. This 'constructivist' approach (Robson, 2002), uses interviews and observations to obtain multiple perspectives in order to construct a reality which is neither wholly objective nor completely subjective.

The epistemological basis for the study is constructivist in approach which, while committing to objectivity, recognises the limitations on this caused by the potential interpretations, biases and values of the researcher as result of familiarity with the classroom context. There is recognition by some writers (Wellington, 2000; Connolly, 2006) that all data (including quantitative data), being founded on decisions taken by people, are therefore influenced by them. This has led to an appreciation of the relevance of both qualitative *and* quantitative data to social research.

A mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods was used, with different parts of the study relying on different methodological emphases, and these were subject to some consideration. It was proposed that this mixed-method provides a 'holistic' view of the study, which aims to gain insights into the practice of story use in the classroom.

An overview was offered of the approaches to data collection, and these included focus group interviews, questionnaires and surveys. This is summarised in Table 18 below.

Table 18. Summary of approaches to data collection

TIMELINE	**PART OF STUDY**	**APPROACH USED**	**RESPONDENTS**
March/April 2008	1. Storyteller/ Teacher Interviews	Semi-structured focus group interviews	Storytellers (*n*= 12) Teachers *(n*=6)
April/June 2009	2. Angus Teacher Surveys/ Student Observation	a) Postal questionnaire b) Observational checklist	a) Teachers (*n*=53) b)Students (*n* =14)
Nov 2009	3. Dundee Primary School Story Sessions	Researcher-administered questionnaire	Pupils (*n*=53)
June 2010	4.Angus Pupil/ Teacher Interviews	a) semi-structured individual interviews b) semi-structured group interviews	a)Teachers (*n*= 10) b) Pupils (*n*=111)
March 2012	5.National Teacher Survey	e-survey	Teachers (*n*=728)

Data collected in different parts of the study were analysed in different ways, including by means of a narrative approach (interviews), quantitative measures (teacher and student questionnaires) and by the application of 'Framework' analysis (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994) (pupil surveys).

Generalisabilty, reliability and validity were discussed. Cognisance was taken of the fact that while statistical representation may not be present, the groups studied are not unusual, as discussed in a later section, and therefore a case can be made for the generalisablity of the study based on this (Robson, 2002). As far as reliability is concerned, it is difficult to achieve total replicability in a study of this nature, as no two subjects will ever be completely identical.

Every effort was made during the course of the study to ensure measures applied were as consistent as is practicable. In terms of validity, it seemed reasonable to trust that the data collection methods measured that which they set out to measure. This 'face validity' (Robson, 2002) is reliant on the diligence of the researcher.

Discussion on the considerations of the study highlights some issues connected with research work with young children. The issues discussed are those of gaining appropriate levels of consent, the nature of the relationship between the researcher and child interviewees, and the need to take into consideration stress factors which may impact on young interviewees. It is noted that care has to be taken in phrasing questions in a way which is meaningful to the children, and in being alert to signals from them that they might be disengaging from the interview.

Some discussion on the effectiveness of the methodological approaches used was presented, with reflections on how issues arising might be addressed in any future study.

In the next chapter, the five parts of the empirical study are described, and data collected are discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Having considered the methodologies which inform the study, the current chapter goes on to report on the five separate parts which comprise the empirical work. Findings are presented deriving from each part, and these are discussed. The five parts are:

- PART 1: Storyteller/Teacher Interviews
- PART 2: Angus Teacher Surveys/Student Observations
- PART3: Dundee Primary School Story Sessions
- PART 4: Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews
- PART 5: National Survey

4.1 PART 1: STORYTELLER/TEACHER INTERVIEWS

4.1.2 Results

In discussing the reasons participants had for using story, it was evident that the teachers tended to use stories mainly for curriculum-based reasons, although these were not always specific or focussed (see Appendix 3, p.412). While subject matter was important, and stories were often chosen to meet formal aims, non-specific but educational rationales were also offered – for example, ‘to develop language skills’; ‘to develop a

love of reading'; 'to spur imagination'. The storytellers' aims were broader, and they cited motivating factors such as 'understanding culture and society'; 'showing and exploring different viewpoints'. Both groups agreed that in using stories, they were seeking primarily to entertain (although this word was not used by the teachers, who preferred 'enjoy' or 'engage'), and it is certainly the case that if an audience of any kind is to attend to a story, it is to the advantage of the storyteller to find ways to promote that attention, whether through subject-matter, language use, style of presentation, or some other means.

Both groups emphasised the nurturing and comforting aspects of story, and both groups noted that use of story can promote an integrative, social bond within a group. The teachers mentioned the use of story as a behaviour management tool, either by using the promise of a story as a reward, or as a means of calming an excitable class or group. The storytellers, noted that stories are not always received in the same way, and that different messages can be understood from the same story. They said, for example – 'you tell the same story to ten different people, and they would have ten different responses, because of the background and the context they bring'. This notion of the different meanings listeners construct from stories was not mentioned by the teachers. This may be due to the fact that teachers are often very goal-oriented in their storytelling and disregard responses that do not meet these goals. It may be in part due to the more homogeneous audience with whom teachers work (usually addressing members of a class group of approximately similar age and background).

In discussing their understanding of what a story is, both groups were agreed that story is a structured, connected way of organising ideas.

Narrative aspects of story were emphasised – a story is ‘an account’, ‘anything anybody tells’ (whether in words or not), and there was no indication of a separate understanding of the ‘soft’ (story-idea) and ‘hard’ (story-format) understanding of story. Both groups noted that stories could be presented through different media, such as pictures or dance. The storytellers mentioned shape and sequence in story – perhaps as a result of the performance aspect of oral storytelling in a less formalised and less directly institutionalised way than that used by teachers in a classroom.

When looking at the types of stories used, both groups drew on very similar sources – both true-life and fictional stories; historical tales; traditional tales; myths and legends, and both groups referred to using personal stories from their own lives.

Stories were selected by both groups based on the perceived interests of the audience (and in this respect the teachers, having established relationships with their audience, were at a distinct advantage). Both groups responded to the needs of the school curriculum or some other programme requirement in selecting stories for use; to their knowledge and experience in working with similar groups in respect of potential interest in the subject matter or format; to their own personal interests, likes and dislikes.

The teachers also selected stories based on attractive illustrations as well as the language and subject matter, and they also responded to

books and stories presented by their pupils, sometimes regardless of their own tastes. This could well be in support of one of their previously stated aims, 'to develop a love of reading' , or else as a means of nurturing self-esteem among pupils who might potentially be disappointed should their choices meet with disapproval or rejection. The storytellers did not refer to stories being selected by their audience.

In seeking indications as to how each group monitors the effectiveness of the storytelling sessions, both groups referred to 'positive responses' from their audience. When asked to expand on this, they both mentioned attentiveness (although the teachers recognised the difficulties in measuring this, noting that an appearance of attentiveness was no real guarantee that pupils were actually engaged in the story), smiles, positive comments. The teachers adapted their measure of effectiveness depending on the purpose for which they were using the story, noting that they would not always assess for learning or even understanding – this would be dependent on the aim of the session. Teachers agreed that they sometimes assess formally (through a follow-up task, such as a written exercise), and sometimes informally (by discussion, or observation of reactions).

4.1.3 Conclusions

Several key points emerged as a result of these discussions –

- Stories are entertaining and engaging. The tendency of storytellers to use the word 'entertain' suggests that they view stories as an end in themselves. The teachers interviewed preferred the terms 'enjoy' and 'engage'. This may simply be a reaction to potential negative value judgements being associated with the idea of educational

activities as entertainment. That is not to say that education cannot be entertaining, but that in order to justify an activity in educational terms, it must be more than this: it must meet the demands of the curriculum. One of the teachers interviewed noted that she uses stories 'sometimes just for enjoyment', but then went on to observe that stories 'develop language skills'. In each case that a teacher referred to the enjoyment inherent in stories, the idea was further developed to refer to enjoyment as a motivating factor for stimulating interest in other aspects of classroom work. Although the storytellers did mention story as 'a way of delivering a message' (and this could be read as an educational message), their responses focussed more on the story as a completed entity.

- Stories have emotional and social resonance. Both teachers and storytellers referred to the 'calming' influence of stories, and teachers mentioned using this to support classroom ethos in terms of both group bonding and behaviour management.
- Stories carry meaning – they are a way of organising ideas. Both groups referred to the narrative aspects of story as a way of organising and unifying ideas. This does suggest that narrative as a mode of cognition is recognised by storytellers and teachers alike.
- Stories can be understood on different levels. This is particularly relevant within an educational context, as it suggests that stories are well-suited to the constructivist approach to learning currently supported by *Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Government 2009c) in the Scottish classroom.

These ideas about story and storytelling confirmed many of my own initial beliefs, and are echoed in much of the literature on the subject.

The discussions with the two groups above (the storytellers, and the teachers) led to the production of an expanded list of sub-questions under each of the headings used in the subsequent stage of the study, the Angus Teacher Surveys. The responses of the storytellers and teachers

in the initial interviews helped to define sections in the questionnaire used in Part 2, the Angus Teacher Surveys. As an example of this, it was clear from the interview responses that both the teachers and the storytellers recognised multiple definitions of story media. For example, a variety of storytelling modes were referred to, from the purely oral through visual and aural to electronic formats as well as dance, drama, and puppetry, and these were therefore used in the questionnaire. Further, the wording used throughout the questionnaire was based on the words used by the storytellers and teachers themselves in response to interview questions, for example, the words 'pleasure/ enjoyment/ entertainment' were used rather than only 'entertainment', as this word did not appear to resonate with the teachers.

As noted in the excerpt from Table 7 below, the interviews helped to establish a working definition of the terminology of the study (in respect of the term 'story', for example), and this also responds to the research question 'What is story – how do teachers define "story"?'

Excerpt from Table 7

Part	**Time-line**	**Relation-ship to Research Questions**	**Aim**	**Data Collection Methods**	**Sampling Method**	**Number in sample**	**Articulation**
1. Storyteller/ Teacher Interviews	March/ April 2008	Q1	To establish a working definition of the terminology of the study	Semi-structured focus group interviews	Both purposive, non-probability samples	Storytellers *n*= 12 Teachers *n*=6	The results of this part of the study help to inform the production of a questionnaire which forms Part 2.

4.2 PART 2: ANGUS TEACHER SURVEYS/STUDENT OBSERVATIONS

The purpose of the second part of the project was to gather information which would be descriptive. There were two different data collection procedures, one based on a teacher questionnaire which collected teachers' ideas about the ways in which they used story, and one based on a checklist completed by student teachers on school work placement, which collected the students' observations about the way in which they perceived teachers to use story in their classrooms. Although both sets of data were collected from Angus schools, these two sets were not matched or cross-referenced.

4.2.1 Teacher surveys

156 teachers in 55 schools were sent surveys. Questionnaires were returned by a total of 53 teachers, representing a return rate of 34% teachers. 29 of the 55 schools responded, representing 53% of all Angus schools. 10 of the 53 teachers responding (19% of respondents) chose not to disclose the name of their schools.

How are stories used in the classroom?

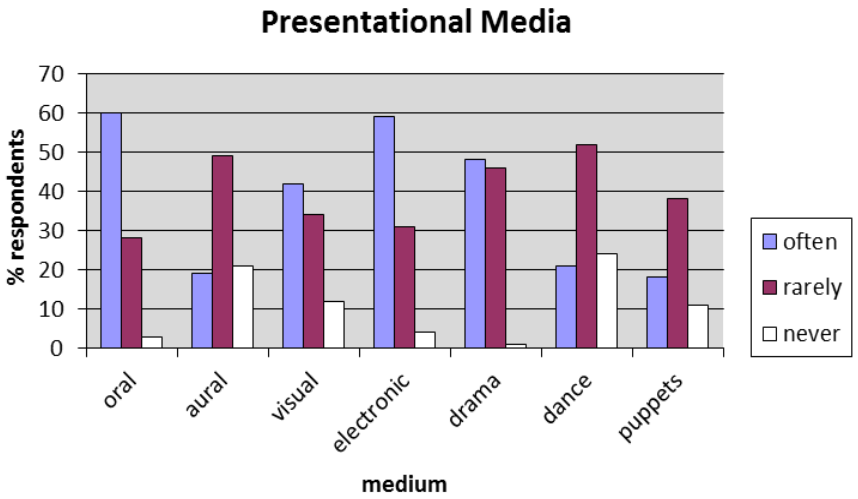


Figure 4. Presentational media (Angus study)

Over all, the most often used storytelling methods are oral and electronic. However, if we combine the results in the 'often' and 'rarely' categories, a slightly different picture emerges. Drama seems to be the method which is most widely used, at least for some of the time, even although it may not be used most often.

Puppets and sound/music are the least popular ways of telling stories, and around a quarter of teachers never use dance or sound/music (that is, aural) for this purpose.

Where do the stories come from?

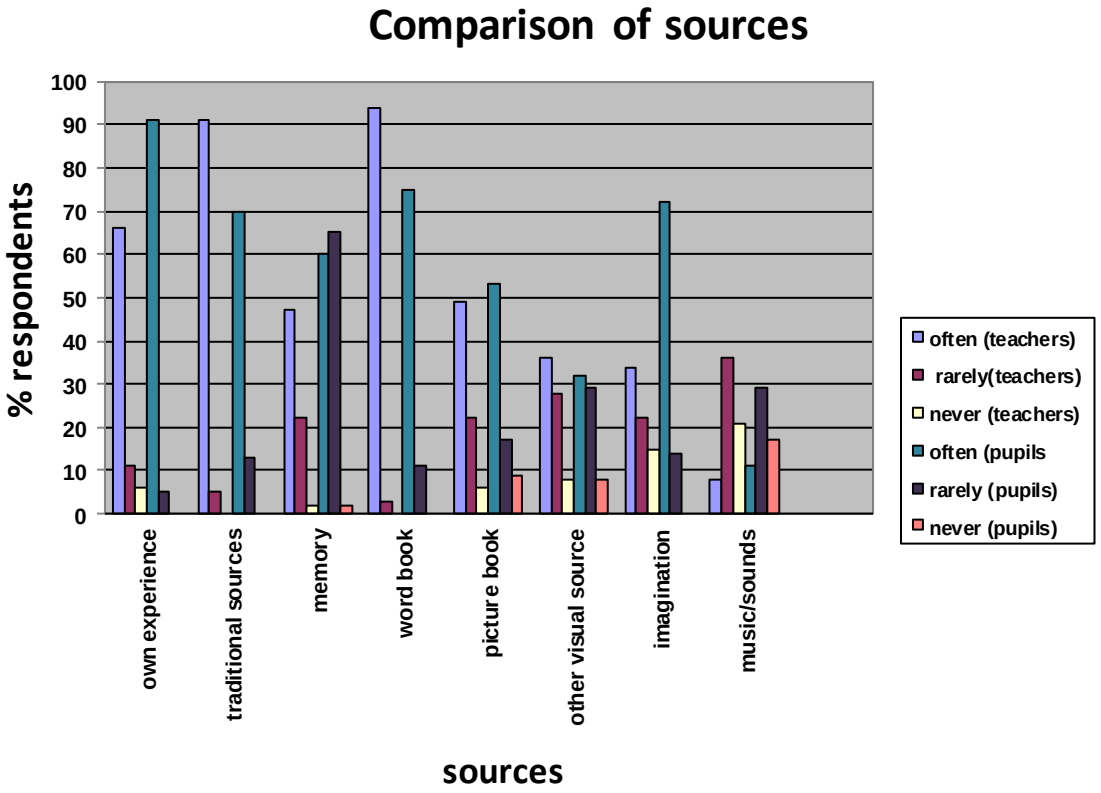


Figure 5. Comparison of sources (Angus study)

Most stories come from a traditional source, and are read from words (as opposed to pictures) in books. Although sounds or music are used as a story source by over half of the teachers surveyed, around one fifth never uses these.

Most teachers (92% of the respondents) tell stories from their own experiences, or from memory, and over two thirds tell stories they have made up themselves from imagination. When stories are presented by pupils, teachers report that all use their own experiences as source, and almost all use a mixture of

traditional sources, stories they have remembered from elsewhere and stories from their imagination. The source least used by both groups is music or sounds.

When a comparison of the sources most and least often used is made, some differences become apparent between teachers and pupils – as might be expected. One of the most obvious differences is that, in the opinion of the teachers who responded to the survey, pupils tell stories based on their own experience more often than teachers do.
This is interesting, given that teachers have many more experiences on which to draw as a source. However, teachers also have many other sources on which to base their stories, whereas pupils may be less likely to have read widely, or to have seen films or heard stories at second-hand which they could potentially re-use, so this difference may be explicable in these terms. Another possible reason for this difference may be that teachers are encouraging pupils to use personal stories reflectively in a broad-form way (see section 2.2.4 p.40) in order to learn from these. Teachers report that pupils are less often likely to use traditional stories than teachers, and this might be explained by the fact that in this age range (5-8), pupils are likely to know fewer traditional stories than teachers. Pupils read stories from words in a book less often than teachers – an outcome probably linked to their age-related reading ability.

The largest differential (38%) is shown between pupils' and teachers' use of imagination as a source for story. Teachers report that pupils use their own imaginations as a story source more often than teachers do. This is perhaps not surprising in light of the fact that teachers have many other sources to draw from, are using story in the course of a

busy working day (not the most conducive atmosphere in which to allow free reign to the imagination), and tend to spend less time generally on imaginative pursuits than children and are therefore ‘out of the habit’.

When we look at the sources which are ‘never’ used, we can see that the two groups are very similar. The only noteworthy difference is that while all pupils use an imaginative source for story at some point, 15% of the teachers who responded say they never do. Although it may be difficult to see how pupils could avoid having to use their imaginations as a story source, as one of the areas of the language curriculum covered in the primary school is imaginative writing and they are encouraged to develop imaginative stories by teachers; it may be worth noting at this point that it is the teachers who are reporting on this. As it is they who are required to meet that particular curricular aim, they are unlikely to report that pupils are not doing it. In fact, it may be quite difficult for teachers to tell whether any given story is based on completely imagined sources, or if a pupil has remembered or adapted a story from memory.

Why do teachers use story?

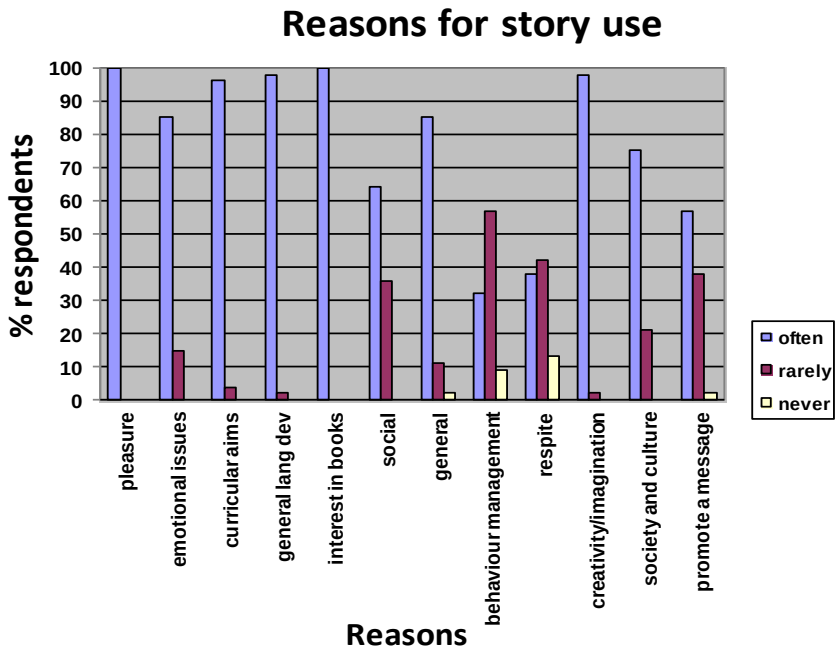


Figure 6. Teachers' reasons for story use (Angus study)

All the teachers who responded to the survey said they often use story for pleasure/enjoyment/entertainment and to promote an interest in books and literature; while almost all often use story to encourage creativity and imagination, to support general language use, and to support curricular aims. In fact, the overwhelming majority of teachers have a wide range of reasons for using story, with only 13% saying that they would never use it as a respite from class work. This suggests that most teachers believe that the use of story in the classroom will meet particular aims, and stories are not used in an unconsidered way or as 'time fillers'. 9% of teachers also say that they never use story as a

behaviour control mechanism, to promote general aims such as thinking skills, or to promote any kind of political or social message.

While the teachers said that they often used story for the wide variety of reasons offered, none of them made any notes in the ‘other’ section. It is unlikely that the survey produced covered every single possible category for story use, and this raises a question as to why none of the teachers came up with any additional categories. This could simply be that after having responded to so many categories, they were reluctant to engage further with the survey. In a survey designed to measure effective use of story, teachers may have felt it inappropriate to note less than optimal usage.

Genres

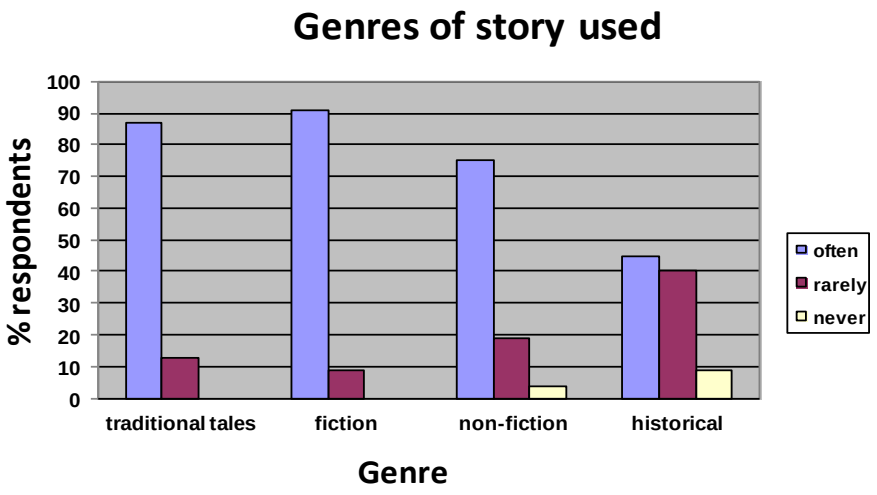


Figure 7. Genres of story used (Angus study)

Of the genres used, fiction and traditional story are the most popular, but all four genres appear to be widely used (although historical stories are used less often, they are still used by 85% of respondents).

Of the genres not used at all, less than 10% of the teachers in the study say they avoid historical and non-fiction stories. Other genres mentioned by respondents were poetry and stories written by the children themselves. It is not possible to tell whether some of the teachers who responded counted stories written by children within the genres the stories might have fallen – for example, fiction written by pupils may have been counted by some teachers in the 'fiction' category, while others may have elected to categorise all pupil-written stories separately.

Who selects the stories used in the classroom?

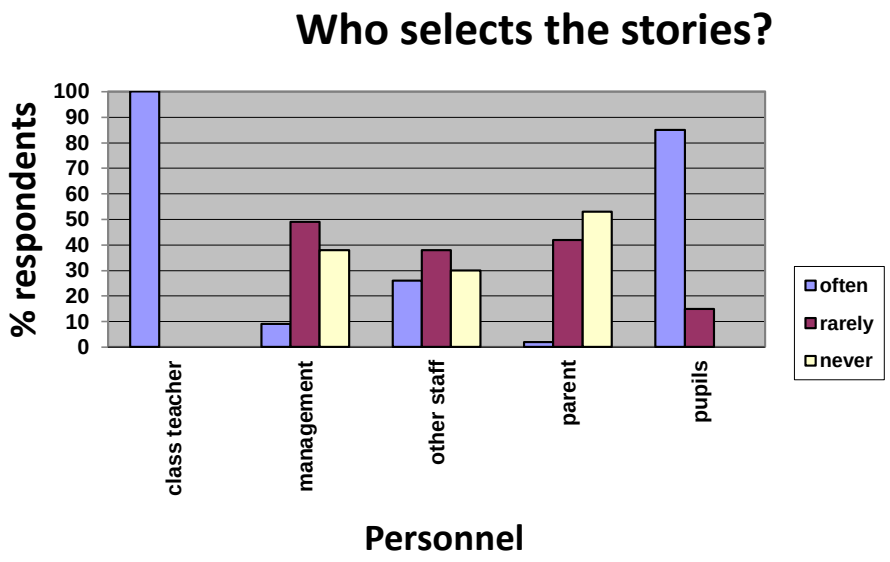


Figure 8. Who selects stories for classroom use (Angus study)?

In all cases the class teacher often makes the selection of which stories will be used, and pupils are part of this process for a large part of the time. Around half of the teachers say parents and other staff members also select stories for use in the classroom. However, half of the teachers say parents never select the stories used, and about one third say other staff members never select the stories. 38% – over one third – of the teachers surveyed said that management (this would include depute head and head teachers) never selected stories for use in their classrooms.

How are the stories selected?

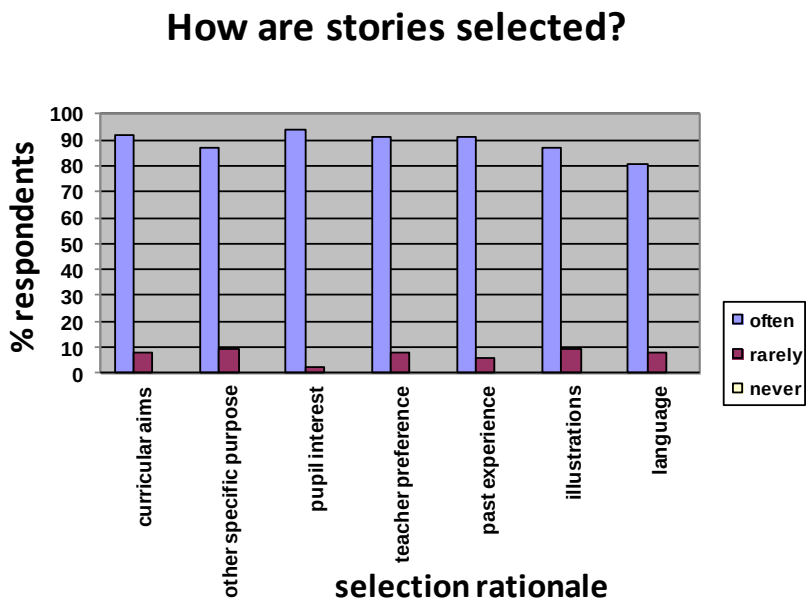


Figure 9. How are stories selected for classroom use (Angus study)?

Most teachers said that they selected stories to meet curricular aims; for other specific purposes such as to meet social/emotional aims; according to the interests of the pupils; according to their own preferences; and also based on the attractiveness of illustrations and use of language.

No teacher said these aims were ‘never’ considered, suggesting that the teachers never make a random selection. This is not at all unlikely, given that the same teachers stated elsewhere in the survey that in most instances they had clear aims for using story in the first place. It is likely, then, that they would take these aims into consideration when selecting stories to meet them.

Measuring effectiveness – has the story met its purpose?

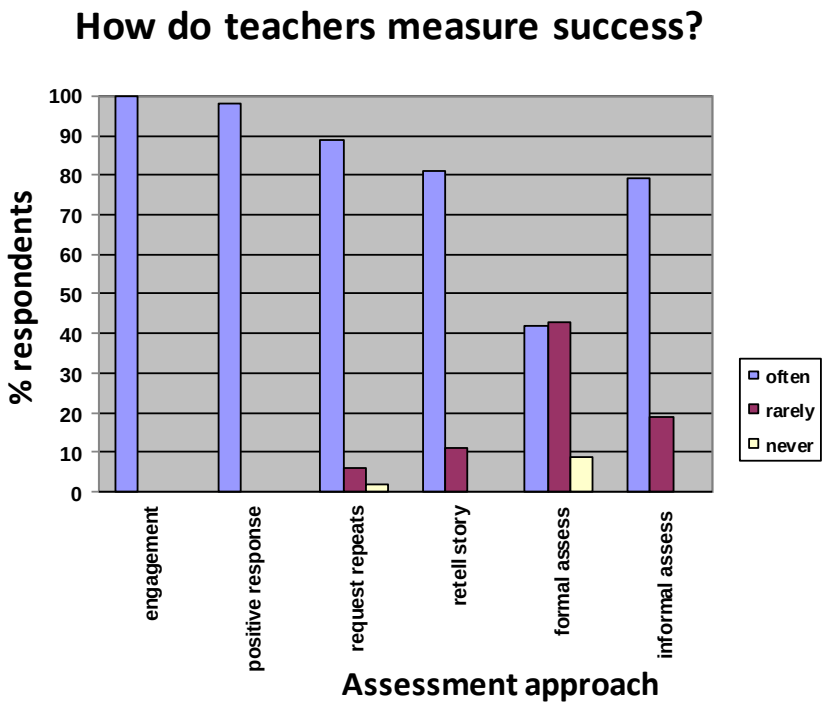


Figure 10. How do teachers measure success (Angus study)?

All teachers said they used pupil attentiveness as a success criterion for story use. Most (98%) used indications from the children such as positive comments, smiles, and so on, as a measure of success. Fewer than half of the teachers formally assessed the use of the story 'often', and 9% said they 'never' formally assessed whether their aims had been met.

This is arguably the most contentious section of the survey – the one which raises the most questions. The issue of engagement is a very

subjective one. While all of the teachers who responded said that they would regard the story as having been successful – that is, having met the teachers' aims – if the children paid attention, both the issue of the aims themselves and that of 'attentiveness' should be examined.

Many of the aims stated earlier in the survey were either cognitive and/or affective. 'Paying attention' is insufficient evidence that either is met (as an example, I have 'paid attention' on many occasions to things I still do not understand, and to explanations which have not affected my behaviour). The notion of 'paying attention' is in itself difficult to measure. How does the teacher know if a particular child is paying attention and not quietly thinking of something else? A possible answer to this is that the session should be assessed, and 79% of the teachers report that they do informally assess on a regular basis, with a further 19% doing so 'occasionally'. So although teachers do look for signs of engagement, they also appear to acknowledge by their actions that this is not a sufficient measure of success.

4.2.2 Conclusions:

All teachers who responded –

- often used stories in their classrooms
- read stories personally
- did this for pleasure and enjoyment
- did it to promote an interest in books and reading
- said that they (rather than anyone else) selected the stories
- judged the session as a success if the children were paying attention

Most teachers who responded (90+%) –

- used traditional stories
- said the stories used were read in words from a book
- told stories from their own experiences
- used stories to meet curricular aims
- used them to support language development
- used stories to encourage creativity and imagination
- used fiction
- chose stories based on curricular aims
- chose stories according to their own preference
- chose stories to meet pupils interest
- judged success if pupils offered a positive response

There were some categories of story which were never used, albeit by a very small number of teachers. Fewer than 10% of all of the respondents said they never

- recounted stories from memory
- told stories from a book using pictures only
- told stories from pictures taken from other sources
- used audio media as a source
- used video as a source
- used computer technology as a source
- offered drama performances by others as a story medium
- told stories from their own experiences

Fewer than 10% of the respondents said they never used story

- to promote general (as opposed to specific) educational aims
- as a behaviour management mechanism
- to promote a religious/social/philosophical message

A similarly small minority said they never used story from a non-fiction or historical source. In the case of this last group, there were 5 teachers who reported that they never used historical stories. This is an interesting result, as history (or People, Past Events and Societies as it is currently known in Scotland) is a compulsory part of the primary school curriculum (see Scottish Government, 2009c) ,and story is generally a well-used methodology for supporting and illustrating teaching in this area.

Between 10% and 30% of teachers said they never

- made up stories themselves
- played music as a story source (and there was no difference made here as to whether the music was 'performed' by the teacher, or played using some other means, for example, from a recording)
- used sound stories
- used pictures made by the teacher or the pupils
- used dance or puppets performed by others for the pupils
- used stories as a respite from class work. This means that most teachers do use story as a 'respite' on occasion. Without further discussion, it is difficult to interpret this response, as some teachers regard story as having an intrinsic educational worth (in a broad

sense), and this would suggest that they might therefore maintain that any classroom use of story is part of the class ‘work’.

When looking at who selects the stories for use in the classroom, it is clear that the teachers themselves and the pupils in the class are in the main responsible. Although sometimes party to providing stories for classroom use, 30-53% of the teachers consulted said that parents, management team and other staff members never do this. 38% of the teachers who replied said that management never selected stories for class use.

A disadvantage of using this type of data collection instrument is that it is not possible to be sure that all respondents are interpreting the questions or statements in the same way. Although an attempt was made at the outset to clarify the statements through the pilot exercise, there still remains the possibility that slightly differing interpretations of the statements could affect the results. One respondent commented on the returned form that there could have been a response between ‘often’ and ‘rarely’, and this was addressed in the later, national questionnaire.

Some points arise from this analysis – teachers use stories in their classrooms, and these are used for a wide range of reasons, including the meeting of curricular goals as well as for more generalised educational purposes. Stories are chosen as a medium because of their perceived capacity to engage and give pleasure to the listeners. Most teachers report that they regularly assess the effectiveness of the stories in meeting their goals.

4.2.3 Student observations

Primary teaching students on placement in 42 schools were asked to take part in this part of the study. 14 returns were received, representing a return rate of 33%.As noted above, the students undertaking the observations came from two separate courses, both Initial Teacher Education courses. These students were on work placement for different lengths of time, and so, in the interest of parity only the returns from the first four weeks of the P.G.D.E. placement were used (matching the four weeks of the B.Ed. 3 placements).

A mean was calculated for each of the sets of scores in order to compare these with the results returned by the teachers in the previous survey. The results obtained from the student observations represented 25% of all the schools initially surveyed, and only 9% of the total number of teachers in the initial survey. Because of the small number of returns, a degree of caution is called for in respect of drawing conclusions from these results, but it is interesting to compare them with the teachers' feedback nonetheless, as they do offer some insights. This is particularly the case as the teachers in the first survey were self-selected and may therefore have been reporting from a position of bias favourable to the study, whereas the classes observed in the second study were co-opted into the study by a third party (the student on placement there) – although it should be emphasised that this was done with the full knowledge and agreement of the class teachers. This is not to say that the students themselves had no particular bias: it is likely that the students who opted to collect data for the study were favourably biased towards the subject

matter. This, however, could influence their results in either of two ways: they may have been keen to report on the use of story, and picked up on even the most casual use of this; or else it is possible that they could have been strict in their interpretation of the concept of what constitutes a 'story', and therefore under-reported story usage. It is not possible, without further investigation, to be confident. As the students were asked to make their returns on a weekly basis, the reports offered a general impression gathered over the course of each week. This was not considered to be problematic given that the teachers' surveys were also dependent on reports given in general terms. The intention behind both of these parts of the study was to gauge the level of commitment to story usage in schools as perceived by class teachers themselves, and to compare this with a more objective viewpoint.

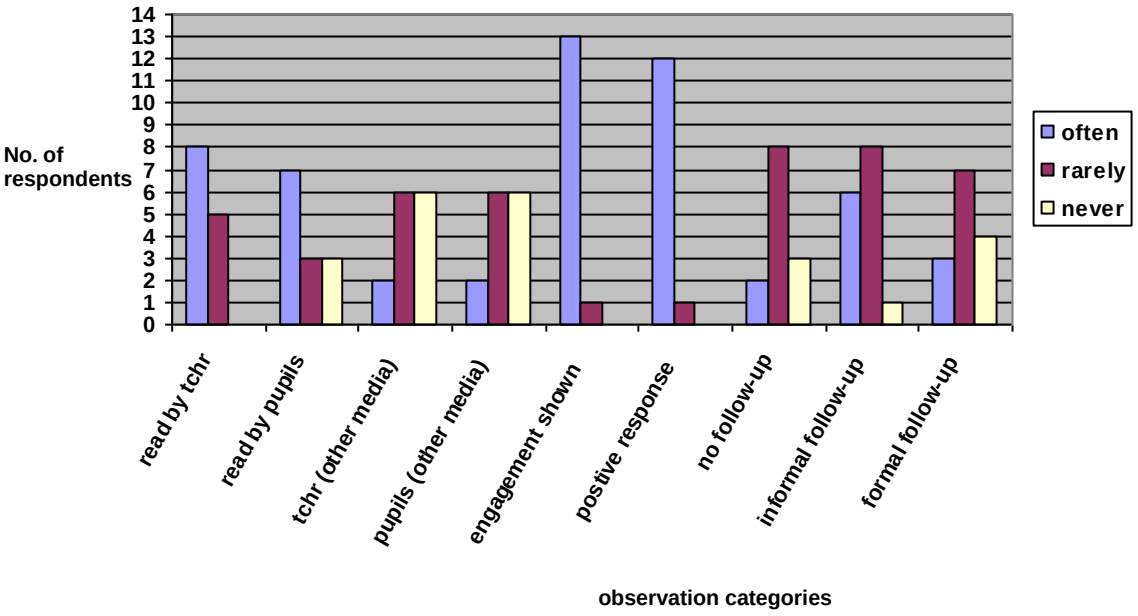


Figure 11. Results of student observations

The main findings from the student observations were as follows: all of the teachers who responded to the survey had said they ‘often’ read stories to the class. On average only 8 of the students reported this happening during their four week placement, however a further 5 noted that the teachers did so ‘rarely’. One student reported that the teacher ‘never’ read a story at all during the four week placement. The student did not, in this case, note whether or not she read to the class in the place of the teacher. This highlights an issue which is discussed elsewhere in this report, that of shared understanding of the survey statements.

All of the teachers previously surveyed had commented that they regard a story to be successful if the children show engagement. The students were asked to record whether they saw engagement in the children (they had been given notes advising them on ‘signs of engagement’ which they should look out for, and these included indicators mentioned by teachers in the preliminary discussions). They were also asked to record ‘positive responses’ (again, these included indicators previously advised by teachers). The students overwhelmingly reported that the pupils they were observing were engaged by the stories, and responded positively to them.

4.2.4 Conclusions

Over all, the students’ observations support the responses offered by the teachers. There are some differences in the students’ reports of follow-up to stories used, although given the small numbers in this part of the study, these should be treated with some caution. All of the teachers had said in the survey that they follow up stories informally. While most teachers said they used formal assessment either ‘often’, or ‘rarely’, a minority never formally assess story use. The student observations suggest that 2 of the 14 classes reported on had no follow-up at all to stories used during the observation period. 4 teachers had no formal follow-up, and 1 no informal follow-up during this time. Without further investigation it is not possible to say whether this reflects the teachers’ usual practice, depending on circumstances affecting the class at the time of the observation.

4.3 PART 3: DUNDEE PRIMARY SCHOOL STORY SESSIONS

4.3.1 Results

A total of 53 questionnaires was distributed, and all were completed and returned. The table below shows how these correspond to the stories told.

Table 19. Number of returned questionnaires listed by story.

class	Story/stories	No. of respondents
p6	The Prince and the Puddock	23
p6/7	Flag, Whuppity Stoorie, Silkie Wife	14
p7	Flag, Tam Lin	16

The two stories which elicited the greatest number of responses were the story of Tam Lin, and the story about the Prince and the Puddock. Sixteen and twenty-three children respectively made comments about these two stories, compared to between eight and fourteen commenting on the other three stories. Different stories were read to each class. I looked more closely at the pupil responses for the Puddock story, as this had been a popular one. This story was told to only one class, and of the twenty-three children who responded to it, all said they liked the story (one pupil emphasised this by replying ‘yes yes yes’ to the question). In response to the question ‘what was the story about?’ all of the pupils mentioned the characters, and only one response referred in any way to

the events of the story. In response to the question 'Did you learn anything from the story, and if so, what?' thirteen of the twenty-three respondents said 'no'. Of the others, only four pupils elected to detail what they felt they had learned, as follows:

- *To believe in yourself*
- *We learned about a king*
- *I learned a new word, puddock*
- *I learned that you don't have to get everything bigger and better because you are just the same*

The pupils were asked if they wished to make any other comments in response to the story, and nine of the twenty-three chose to do so – four commenting positively about the story itself, and three commenting that the story was too long (this was something that I, as the storyteller, had already mentioned as an aside during the telling of the story). Two of the comments were illegible, but both said 'add more ….' (one of the illegible words might have been 'music', but this is not certain).

Because the results relating to the Prince and the Puddock story seemed to be suggesting a focus on the part of the pupils on character rather than any other aspect of story, I then conducted a Framework analysis (Srivastava and Thomson, 2009) on the full set of returns, concentrating on questions 1 (Which story did you hear?) and 3 (What was it about?) in order to confirm this. The themes against which the children's responses were indexed were Subject, Title and Character. The indexing was done by examining the pupil responses, and charting comments which referred to any of these features in the appropriate

category. The stories had not been given titles when introduced to the pupils, and any titles referred to would be ascribed to the stories by the children themselves retrospectively. As became clear in the analysis of the way they referred to the stories later, this was not the case: the children did not ascribe titles to the stories. In the case of subject and character, the spread of responses falling into each of these categories was remarkably even. Across the two questions, pupils referred to the stories in terms of subject matter 60 times, and character 63 times. This contradicted my initial belief that there was a focus on character, and led me to conclude that the story itself which had led me to this conclusion was the determinant of the initial result, and that there was something particular to that story which caused this result. The breakdown of categories for each story is shown in Table 20 below.

Table 20. Number of references to stories by children, categorised by title, subject and character

Story	Referenced by title	Referenced by subject	Referenced by character(s)
Whuppity Stoorie	0	1	13
Tam Lin	2	20	5
The Silkie Wife	0	14	9
Scotland's Flag	0	25	19
The Prince and the Puddock	0	0	17

Having used the questionnaires to collect responses from each of the three classes, pupils' statements about what they felt they had learned from the stories were categorised using the codes defined previously, with

the further addition of a category ‘O’ for any statements which did not fall into the defined categories.

A comparison of the storyteller’s intended outcomes from the sessions (as detailed above) with the outcomes perceived by pupils is laid out in Table 21 below.

Table 21. Comparison of storyteller’s intended outcomes compared with pupils’ perceived outcomes listed by story.

Story		**Outcomes**						
		SC	**K**	**PS**	**C**	**L**	**E**	**O**
Whuppity Stoorie	ST	✓			✓	✓	✓	
	P				✓		✓	
Tam Lin	ST	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	P		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
The Silkie Wife	ST	✓			✓	✓	✓	
	P	✓		✓			✓	
Scotland’s Flag	ST	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
	P		✓				✓	✓
The Prince and the Puddock	ST	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	P	✓	✓	✓			✓	

Key:
ST = storyteller P = pupils
Outcomes: SC = socio-cultural K = knowledge PS = personal and social C = creative L = language and literature E = entertainment/enjoyment O = other

Although in most categories, there is some indication that the storyteller’s intended outcomes have been recognised by some of the pupils, there are several instances where pupils’ perceived outcomes are not matched with the storytellers intentions, as follows:

Whuppity Stoorie

The pupil responses showed no note of recognising that this was a traditional Scots folk-tale and as such part of their cultural heritage (SC), nor did the responses recognise any language and literature (L) outcome in spite of the similarity of this story to the European fairytale 'Rumpelstiltskin'.

Tam Lin

There was no recognition of socio-cultural or language and literature outcomes. This story, however, elicited some unexpected responses. Three pupils made reference to the forest in the story (Carterhaugh), and noted that the story was a warning about not entering that particular forest. One pupil thought the story was teaching that fairies are evil, and one commented that he 'learned that story teaches you things' – a metacognitive acknowledgement of the value of story as a learning medium. Another pupil noted 'Trust. Don't give up. Listen to your dad' – three comments referring to behavioural-affective outcomes.

The Silkie Wife

Again, there was no recognition of the language and literature aspects of this story. One pupil noted that he learned 'to be silent when someone's talking'. Although this comment was categorised under personal and social outcomes, it does deserve to be examined separately, as it is a reference to a behavioural- affective outcome relating to the *process* of taking part in a story session rather than a direct response to the *content*

of a specific story. Another comment (see also below) noted that 'I learned you can make stories out of the back of your head'. This would seem to refer not only to a creative, but also to an affective outcome, as it raises awareness not only of the creative process, but also awareness of a potential for behaviour change – the pupil was made aware that he too could do this.

Scotland's Flag

This story, in spite of being the one told to most pupils, elicited proportionately fewer responses than the others. Of the forty respondents who had heard this story, only fourteen referred to it. As it had a historical basis, it is perhaps true to say that this story was less embellished in the telling than the others, and this may have made it less engaging as an entertainment, although only one of the thirty respondents who heard that story noted that they did not like it (the comment stated 'Flag one is boring').

This was also the only story to which respondents showed any indication of ambivalence – one pupil did not comment as to whether or not he liked it, one said it was 'ok' and one used the word 'yeah' in response (which I read as being rather less than enthusiastic, although this interpretation is subjective).

There was only one match in the storyteller – pupil responses of any outcomes other than that of entertainment (this was the 'fact' that 'Saint Andrew didn't want to be put on the same cross as Jesus' – a myth which was alluded to in the telling of the story, but one with which the

pupils were already familiar), although one pupil did note (as above) that ‘story teaches you things’.

There were several factual aspects to this story that I thought the pupils would have acknowledged, but which did not prove to be the case – for example, the fact that the Scots flag is one of the oldest national flags in the world; the specific colours of the flag; the place and date of the battle and the names of the kings involved, and so on. It is possible that some of these details were already known to the pupils (they had, after all, been studying Scots language and culture all week), but it is unlikely that all were known. One possible interpretation of this result might be that as the children did not find this story so engaging, they were less inclined to dwell upon it in retrospect, and therefore less likely to comment on it spontaneously, although it should be emphasised that this is only an assumption.

It is notable that the characters in this story were only very vaguely described, the main focus of the tale being on the flag itself.

<u>The Prince and the Puddock</u>

No recognition was shown of the creative or language and literature aspects of this story. One pupil commented that he had learned a new word – ‘puddock’, which response was categorised under ‘knowledge’ *and* ‘socio-cultural’. Although it could also have been categorised under language and literature, I felt that this was stretching a point.

Over all, the outcome which achieved the greatest degree of success was undoubtedly that of entertainment/enjoyment. Apart from this, there are few clear matches between the storyteller’s aims and the

pupils' recognition of learning outcomes: two stories (Whuppity Stoorie and Tam Lin) matched for creative outcomes, two (Tam Lin and The Prince and the Puddock) matched for personal and social outcomes and two (the Silkie Wife and the Prince and the Puddock) matched for socio-cultural outcomes. However, the number of matches against each of these criteria has not been taken into account: I have recorded *any* match, which means that against any matching response there is at least one pupil for whom the story met this aim. This does not allow therefore any measure of the *degree* of success of a given story.

It is clear that some of the learning derived from the stories was not anticipated – this supports the previous discussion concerning the constructivist nature of metaphorical/analogical processes. Davidson (1976), warns that cognitive distortions can take place if the terms of the similarity between base element and analogue are not fully understood – and this may well be so in the case of the pupils who understood the Tam Lin story as being a warning not to enter the forest at Carterhaugh. As the story is a fiction and the forest does not exist, this would be a pointless outcome and therefore demonstrates a skewed understanding on the part of these pupils. Those pupils who understood the story to be a warning against entering the forest at Carterhaugh did not generalise this warning to apply to *any* forest in their responses.

There are instances where the meaning constructed by the pupils is based on their own previous experiences, and as such may be wholly appropriate, even where unintended by the storyteller. The two following accounts are evidence of this:

After telling the story of the Silkie Wife, I sat for a moment in silence, allowing the children to consider the story and to make any response they wished without interference or prompting. After a pause, one girl aged about 11 looked at me and said, in a very matter-of-fact tone, 'Well, that's the way life goes.' I was most surprised by this response, as the story has a very low-key and quite sad ending. I agreed with her, and did not discuss the ending any further, as I wished to allow her to absorb whatever significance it might have had to her in her own way.

When she had completed the survey, one girl came to speak to me about the Tam Lin story. She was very animated, and had clearly been very engaged by that particular story. Without any prompting, she wanted to tell me how personally significant she had found it, and she went on to recount at length an anecdote about an incident where she felt she should have listened to her own father's warnings about something – and she clearly related this to the experiences of the main character (Janet) in the story. She was drawing a very clear analogy between her experiences, and Janet's, in order to derive a conclusion which could be applied to a general set of circumstances (Bjorklund 2005).

A further incident occurred during my return visit to the school which is worthy of documentation. One boy seemed to be spending a very long time filling in his survey sheet, and so I waited by the table at which he was writing. He looked over at me, and began to chat as he wrote. He was a thin, ill-kempt looking boy of about 11. He asked me if I lived near the school and if I would come back and tell more stories. He asked me if I

would come and tell ‘thrilling’ stories, and seemed quite curious about the idea of making stories up as you go along. His teacher noted her surprise as he continued to write more and more (he ran out of space and had to continue on the reverse of the sheet), as this was unusual for him. I told him that he did not have to make a long or detailed response, but he was most insistent that he wanted to. Because of this, I am recording his comments here (I have corrected his spelling):

Question: Which story/stories did you hear?

Pupil response: The silkies and one about a witch

Question: Did you like them?

Pupil response: Yes/yes

Question: What were they about?

Pupil response: The one about the silkies was about a man which fancied a silkie and the silkies would go on to the beach and they would dance then they had a child and they would shed the skin but he hid the silkie’s skin in a chest and one day her son finds it then she puts her skin back on and goes back to her family the end

Question: Did you learn anything?

Pupil response: Yes I learned you can make a story out of the back of your head

Question: Any comments?

Pupil response: Thank you for that

It took him quite a while to write all of this, and the detail of recall in this instance is quite significant. None of the other responses recorded anything like this amount of detail. The boy’s response to the question

about what he had learned showed a level of metacognitive awareness that was evident in only two other responses ('I learned that story teaches you things', 'I learned to be creative'). It seemed to me to be very clear that there had been something very motivational for this boy in the process of listening to stories, and that he had reflected on this at some length. He was also very eager to connect with me and the level of his commitment to responding to the survey seemed to emphasise this.

4.3.2 Conclusions

Although this was a small scale study, it offers some points for consideration –

- Most pupils were engaged by the storytelling process, evidenced by their interest at the time, their responses both at the time and during the revisit, and their repeated requests for more stories.
- The story which elicited the lowest rate of return in respect of learning (Scotland's Flag), was the one which contained most facts, and was also the story told to most pupils.
- Knowledge-based aims were less evidenced in the pupil responses than other types of outcome.
- Some pupils were able to draw spontaneous metacognitive conclusions about the process of storytelling.
- Only very few children demonstrated evidence of the intended learning from the stories told.

- Some pupils derived unintended conclusions from the stories based on their own experiences.

The questions in the survey were deliberately wide, as I was interested to discover the different ways in which the stories might have been interpreted by the pupils.

It is not possible to tell from the pupil responses whether some outcomes were not commented on because they were not met, or if they were not considered (or considered subordinate to those outcomes commented on). This suggests that in any future study, it would be useful to ask pupils to comment on outcomes under the categories defined by the storyteller, with perhaps a further category in which pupils could make further comment.

4.4. PART 4: ANGUS PUPIL/TEACHER INTERVIEWS

4.4.1 Results

The results of the data collected are analysed in two sections –

A. Pupil Interviews

B. Teacher Interviews

A. Pupil Interviews

The data collected during the Pupil Interviews were analysed across all four schools taking part in the study. It had been my original intention to compare inter-school results, but when I examined the interview transcripts closely, the consistency of responses was remarkable. I had thought that given the very different socio-economic locations of the schools, there would have been significant differences in the responses. In fact this was not the case.

The themes addressed by the pupils in the course of the interviews fell into a total of twelve categories which recurred across all of the interviews. These themes were ascribed the following codes, which were then used to index the statements for later comparison.

THEME	CODE
Title	T
Story content/subject matter/plot	C
Visual aspects (e.g. pictures)	V
Style (use of language/genre)	S
Characters (by name)	Ch
Medium	M
Presentation	P
Gender references	G
Issues of age-appropriateness	A
Technical references	Tech
Length of story	L
Home-school references	HS

An example of one of the collated sets of pupil interviews, with children's statements indexed according to the themes identified, is included in Appendix 15, p.440.

These themes were derived as described in Chapter Three. They are listed in order of importance to the pupils, these being defined according to the number of comments or references ascribed to each theme (codes in brackets):

i. Story content (plot or subject matter) (C)

ii. Presentation (P)

iii. Visual aspects (for example, pictures) (V)

= Characters (Ch)

= Medium (M)

iv. Awareness of technical aspects of means of discourse (for example, references to author, to awareness of print/text, to details such as story synopsis, and so on) (Tech)

= Awareness of story title (T)

= Style (use of language, genre, and so on) (S)

v. Gender issues (G)

= Home-school links (HS)

vi. Length (L)

vii. Age appropriateness (A)

As noted previously, these themes were derived from the children's discussions (p.156). It is interesting to note that each of these themes was present in every set of class data (although not necessarily in every interview group), suggesting that these themes are generally regarded as important by pupils in respect of their responses to story.

Although the pupils were initially asked to respond to a question about stories in the classroom, later questions were designed to encourage the children to think more widely about the attributes of stories and storytellers *(Are some people (or some teachers) better at telling stories than others? Do you know anyone who is good at telling stories? What do they do? Do you know anyone who isn't good at telling stories? Why not? What do they do?).*

The pupils' discussion, analysed according to the themes identified above, now follows:

i. Story content (plot or subject matter)

The children often referred to the stories they had heard in terms of what happened in the story, rather than by character reference or title – for example, the one in which :

> *the little animals didn't do anything and they're lazy and at the end the hen doesn't let them eat the food. It serves them right because they didn't do anything so they didn't get to eat it.*

The mention of a particular story or type of story often triggered a response from another child in the group, and some dialogue would then ensue:

I like ghost stories / bats / I'm not scared of bats

This type of exchange occurred more often in relation to references to story content than to any other aspect of story.

Children discussed their own responses to story content, and in particular their emotional responses – they recognised that stories can not only *be* happy or sad stories, for example, but also that stories can trigger a happy or sad response, and they showed recognition of the fact that this response might be different for different listeners:

> *I don't like happy stories cos they make me feel sad /* (interrupting) *Funny ones, cos they make you a bit dizzy even / I don't like some happy stories / I don't like sad stories because* … (inaudible) */ I'm not scared of a scary story / I'm scared because some might be real / I didn't like the gremlins, cos that was like scared.*

One child (a girl) showed a heightened sense of awareness of the analogous nature of story when she commented:

> *Stories can be about your feelings as well, not just about in the stories' feelings – about YOUR feelings as well, cos I saw something on television, it's called the Never Ending Story the boy was reading a book and then he was crying because the horse died. It was thinking about it …*

This was noted by another child, although less eloquently:

> *It's like when something dies, like my granny died, and that makes you angry…*

There were some patterns of preference in respect of subject matter, with girls tending to refer more often to stories about princesses than any other single subject (and this occurred across all of the interviews), while the boys referred to a wider variety of subject matter – 'scary' stories, action stories, stories about specific characters (for example, Spiderman). Boys referred to factually based stories – historical tales, nature books (about animals), and also general knowledge stories

(volcanoes were a particular focus at this time, as there had been a recent news item about an erupting volcano) more often than girls did. As well as this gender divide, however, there were many stories referred to by both girls and boys, especially traditional tales, books by well-known children's authors (particularly Julia Donaldson), media-driven stories (*Ben Ten*, *High School Musical*).

In addition to noting their preferences, the pupils were very clear about the types of stories they didn't like. Children repeatedly noted that they did not like 'scary stories', and this was mentioned by both genders. Individual children obviously had their own preferences, with some children noting that they didn't like stories for example, about rats/football/cars/'*Disney* ones' and so on, but there was no real pattern to this other than a recognition that there are some subjects that they would categorise as 'girls' stories' and some as 'boys' stories'.

ii. Presentation

The way stories are presented prompted a good deal of comment from the pupils, and they expressed clear views on this. After story content, this was the second most important aspect of story noted. Pupils mentioned a variety of aspects of presentation – clarity of speech, fluency, expression, interaction with the audience, use of supporting illustrations and other visual or auditory devices, attention to the detail of the story. They showed a great deal of awareness of how presentation style can enhance or detract from the story experience, and were quite discerning in their appreciation.

Clarity of speech

It was evident that pupils were aware that a clear speech model enhanced the story experience. There were many comments recorded along the lines of:

> *You have to do it really clear and loud so actually you can hear it /She speaks nice and clear / … and loud / I mean she's really loud and she's really clear*

Some pupils also noted when lack of clarity detracted from the experience:

> *If they don't speak clear, it doesn't make it any good / (It's not good) if they shout at them / …and don't speak clear / If they don't speak clear, it doesn't make it any good / Do you know my dad? he's so rubbish at reading stories because he always says this* (mumbles)

Fluency

Pupils showed an appreciation of the fact that reading aloud takes some practice in order to achieve fluency:

> *They read carefully / Read it carefully / When they can read all the words / Read them more / Practising / … because you get more … you get gooder and gooder / …with tricky words*

They recognised that a lack of fluency detracted from enjoyment of the story:

> *Some people aren't* (good) *because they are a bit small and old an crunched up / because they kind of miss out some of the words – my granddad forgets some of the things about what happens in the three little pigs . that's what he told me last night but he forgot some …. / some people just say blah blah blah / they would be like getting all the words wrong*

Expression

The expressiveness with which the story is delivered generated a good deal of discussion, and pupils recognised and appreciated storytelling technique:

> *She's really good at them because sometimes she reads us a story she says words like if it's a tiger she does the words like* (makes roaring sound) *and it makes it loud /She makes the voices /She puts on voices / She makes big exciting bits and she goes 'baa!' and 'boo!' and she makes everything up in the book, and she makes it really loud / If somebody's quite angry then you say it in an angry voice, and if they say something funny then you say it in a funny voice.*

Teachers were compared favourably with parents and others in respect of this, with children making comments such as:

> *It's my dad* (who isn't a good storyteller) *cos he's really got a low voice it doesn't sound… he doesn't do the voices.*

Interaction with the audience

The children interviewed showed a degree of awareness of the 'performance' aspect of storytelling, and when asked what makes a 'good' storyteller, they recommended:

> *Give people shots of reading stories / Turn the book – around / Find things in the book and let us count things in the book, how many there are.*

Use of supporting illustrations and other visual or auditory devices

Pupils noted that good storytellers make use of puppets, CDs, actions, costume (*'dressing up'*) as well as pictures (which they regarded as an important aspect of story, and which was one of the third most important details they mentioned).

Attention to the detail of the story

Finally, in terms of presentation, pupils mentioned that they did not like it when storytellers missed out sections of a story, but actually liked it when the storyteller would embellish the story, for example,:

> *Say more bits of the story which are not in the story / …like you add some more details/ …if they put jokes in it.*

iii.= Visual aspects / Characters / Medium

These three themes appeared to have equal importance to the pupils interviewed as they were each referred to by the children on an equal number of occasions. They referred repeatedly to the importance of pictorial support, and in every interview children noted that pictures increased their enjoyment of story. They noted that pictures help in

deriving understanding of a written story, and they also recognised that story can be conveyed solely by pictures. No children noted a preference for stories without supporting pictures, and the children were quite specific about the kinds of pictures they preferred:

> *Lots of different colours in it / Loads of different colours / Bright colours on them / A nice background / All the colours in it.*

They were clearly unimpressed by black and white pictures, and only one child mentioned that he 'didn't mind' stories with no pictures.

The theme of characters within stories was a difficult one to analyse, and I have been quite specific about what I have categorised as a 'character' reference. I have counted as a character reference only those characters mentioned by name. Thus 'Princess Aurora' would count as a reference to a specific character, whereas 'the princess' or 'princesses' would be categorised within the theme of 'content' as it refers to a character *type*, and is therefore considered to be subject matter. What further complicates the analysis of this theme is the fact that many children's stories use the lead character's name in the story title, for example, *Thomas the Tank Engine*. In these instances, I have used my own judgment and the context in which the reference occurs to determine in which category the reference should be included. That being said, it was important to me to examine the children's references to individual characters, because this, along with subject matter, had appeared as being of equal importance to the children in the earlier Dundee Primary

School Surveys (Part 3). The children interviewed in Part 4 of the study did not seem to regard the two elements as being equally important. The children in the Angus interviews referred to story content on many more occasions than to specific characters.

Children's references to the story medium showed their categorical awareness of the different media through which story can be conveyed. In every interview children referred without any prompting to stories they had encountered in books, film, TV, DVD, pictures, computer media and in oral storytelling sessions. They did not differentiate among these story types, and conversation moved back and forth across the media. Several children mentioned a preference for books which were supported by supplementary media:

> *It was a leap frog book but you don't have to read it, its just got this kind of pencil and if you want you can if you don't want to read it you can just dab on the words and it tells you and if you want you can just press on the words and it tells you again / I've got the book and the DVD / My favourite story is my dinosaur book because its got the real size of the T Rex' s jawbone, it's a big bit of cardboard / It's because you get a pencil – you get six pencils / There's lots of stories and prizes.*

iv.= Technical references/Title/Style (use of language)

Children's awareness of technical aspects of stories in books was evidenced by their use of language such as:

Chapter /The blurb on the back / Speech bubbles / Storyteller / Author / Exclamation mark / print conventions, for example, *Black words/ Thick words, and then you shout them.*

I categorised the number of references to story titles in this part of the study because this was another of the themes looked at in the Dundee Primary School sessions in Part 3, and I therefore wished to compare the foci of the children in both parts. As in Part 3, story title did not appear to be of great importance to the children, they referred to stories by either subject matter or by character far more often than by title (references to title occurred one third as often as to subject matter, and half as often as to character).

In terms of references to story style, the children interviewed overwhelmingly noted a preference for 'funny' stories, and this was referred to in every interview. They liked interesting use of language, and mentioned:

To write them interesting / Different words / If the words are funny or nice / Silly words / Big words.

There were some contradictory opinions when it came to use of language, as one child, for example, stated a dislike for '*silly words'*, while others had been attracted by these.

v.= Gender Issues/ Home- School links

Gender issues within story choices were mentioned in several of the interviews, and the pupils talked about 'girls' (or boys') stories', although

they were not very specific about what these were. There seemed to be some kind of unspoken yet mutual understanding of this. Examples offered of stories or types of stories which were defined as gender-specific were:

> *I don't like girly ones like Peppa Pig and High School Musical / I don't like cars. It's for boys* (this was quickly countered, however with *There's girls' cars in it* which was confirmed by another pupil very matter-of-factly, *'For girls!)*

Although there were clear references to different preferences re subject matter (as noted above), the pupils themselves did not seem to find this worthy of discussion.

Where gender specificity was mentioned, the children were remarkably even-handed in their discussion of this:

> *Some boys stories are good and some girls stories are good / I would like a book if it had girls and boys / If it was just a whole class of girls, then it would be ok to have a girls story and if it was just a whole class of boys it would ok to have a boys story but if it's a mixture of girls and boys then you need to have a girl-boy book /So you both need to have a girl-boy story / You can have a girls' story and then add a boy's story on the end of it.*

So although there was some recognition of the fact that on occasion boys and girls might have different story preferences in respect of subject

matter (and this was noted previously) , this was not regarded as being much of an issue, there being a good deal of cross-over interest between genders. The children were very appreciative of the need to appeal to the whole audience regardless of gender.

There was no sense in which the children regarded story as being something that they encountered either only at school, or only at home. Only in one instance did a pupil question whether we were discussing school issues ('Are you allowed to do ones at home?'), and all of the children were as used to engaging with story at school or at home. In respect of stories presented at home, children referred to their mothers as storytellers more often than any other family member, closely followed by their fathers. Grandparents did not feature often as storytellers, and one child mentioned that his aunt told him stories, while another referred to a brother. Although family members were mentioned as storytellers, a number of children dismissed their efforts:

> *My dad, he's not good / My mum! She picks boring stories / My granny was a little bit not good / When there's a big word my mum doesn't read it / My granma's not good at stories. She actually doesn't read the books properly.*

One child, however, staunchly defended his parents' storytelling abilities:

> *My mum and my dad are really good at telling stories. They do it properly and when it's … when there's speech marks they always have proper information and stuff …*

vi. Story Length

The children showed mixed responses to the length of stories:

> *I hate them cos they're a big massive book / I don't like many pages in them/ I like short ones.*

Countered by:

> *I like it when its long … cos I like it when you want to hear more of it when its maybe about a thing that you like / if it was a really good story and you got to the end bit and there was no more then you wouldn't like it.*

It should be noted that preferences for longer stories were always conditional on whether or not the story was liked – the children were not indiscriminate in commenting on story length, but were quite discerning in their responses. They were clear in noting that when they were particularly enjoying a story, they wanted it to be longer: otherwise, they preferred something short.

vii. Age Appropriateness

The children in all but one of the schools referred at some point to the age-appropriateness of certain stories – they were proud of having 'moved on' from certain stories regarded as being more suitable for younger children (Thomas the Tank Engine, The Princess and the Frog, and the Care Bear stories were the only stories mentioned by name in this category, although another child spoke about being 'past that reading book' when a particular story was named). No children spoke about any stories that they regarded

as too difficult, or too grown-up for them, whereas disapproval was shown in respect of stories regarded as ‘babyish’:

> *I don’t really like younger stories / I don’t like (??) cos It’s too baby for me / I don’t like (??) cos it’s too baby for me / I’m past baby stories.*

Tana Primary was the only school in which the pupils did not refer at all to age-appropriateness in their discussion of story. These children were of a similar age and stage to the others, and the questions they were asked were the same. It seems that the topic simply did not come up in these interviews. The issue of age appropriateness was the least important of the themes which the children discussed, and by quite a long way: in fact, comments about this occurred only half as often as the second least-well addressed theme (story length) and twenty-five times less often than the most well-addressed theme (story content or subject matter).

Summary of pupil interviews

The themes which children referred to most often, which generated the most discussion, and which were therefore identified as being the most important to them were content or subject matter, and presentation.

Although girls and boys did have some different preferences in terms of subject matter, there was much common ground, and so long as material was presented evenly, this did not cause them much concern. The boys tended to have a wider range of interests re subject matter, and only boys ever referred to fact-based stories. The children identified plot

or storyline as being the most important factor in determining whether or not they liked a story.

They also noted in many instances that they did not like ‘scary’ stories, and on the few occasions where this statement was contradicted, it was done with a tone of bravado, as though the child wanted to make a point. The few children who said that they *liked* scary stories seemed to be pleased to be presenting themselves as somehow ‘different’ to the others in the group. I would propose that their reaction was more closely related to issues of age-appropriateness – it seemed to me that those children were implying that they were ‘grown-up’ enough *not* to be scared (and certainly the children who said they were not afraid of bats, or ghosts, were showing their understanding of the fantasy-based nature of the portrayal of these phenomena), rather than saying they actually *enjoyed* the experience of being scared. Although the pupils surveyed in Part 3: the Dundee Primary School sessions gave equal importance to both story content and character, it was clear in the case of the Angus interviews that the children were more interested in content.

The way stories are presented was commented on by the pupils, and they recognised the expertise of their teachers in respect of this, often comparing teacher styles of presentation favourably with those of parents and others. This is to be expected, given the fact that teachers are often more experienced in storytelling, having had in some cases many years to hone this skill. That pupils are highly aware of the nuances in storytelling skills and well able to articulate these is testimony to their expertise as consumers of story, gained over a wide variety of storytelling experiences

delivered by different people (teachers, parents, librarians, other relatives, TV presenters, and so on). What is very evident is that children know (and can articulate) what makes a good storyteller. Clarity, fluency, expression, attention to detail, audience interaction, use of supporting materials, and the ability to embellish (or improvise) on the story were all regarded by pupils as being important factors in presenting stories well.

The least important factors to the children in respect of their enjoyment of story were gender issues, whether the stories were told at home or at school, the length of the story, and age appropriateness.

B. Results of Teacher Interviews

The ten teachers interviewed worked with Primaries1, 2 and 3. Four of the teachers worked in composite P1/2 classes, and one of the teachers worked with a composite P2/3 class. The remainder taught single stream classes of either P1 or P2 children.

The teachers had a range of teaching experience. Two of the teachers were in their N.Q.T. (first) year, two had been teaching for between two and ten years, two had been teaching for between ten and twenty years, and four had been teaching for more than twenty years (one of the teachers, who had thirty years' teaching experience, was in her last year of teaching and retired shortly after the study took place).

All of the teachers said that they used stories in their classrooms.

<u>Story definitions</u>

All of the teachers interviewed referred to a variety of media used as a means of discourse – TV, DVD, books, puppets, pictures, and so on. None of the teachers confined their definition of story to either the written

or the spoken word. Most teachers noted that stories had a particular structure – that of beginning, middle and end. This reflects the definitions offered in Chapter Two (*inter alia* Abbott, 2008), although one teacher did note that in some cases the ending may be unstated, allowing listeners to predict a conclusion. This does not challenge any of the definitions offered, however, as in such instances an ending is implied rather than made explicit.

What makes a 'good' story for classroom use?

The three aspects of story mentioned most often by teachers as meeting the requirements of a good story for use in the classroom were content (plot or subject matter), engaging characters and style (particularly use of language). These were all aspects noted by the pupils who were interviewed, although style was not a priority in the pupils' responses. Visuals (pictures) and opportunities for audience interaction were each mentioned by two of the teachers. The potential for audience interaction in a story suggests that the teachers who mentioned this were considering how a story could be presented. Aspects of visuals and presentation were also present in the pupils' definitions of what makes a good story. The final story constituent noted by only one teacher as being important was that of structure. I have included this aspect of story in the same category as 'story content (plot or subject matter)' in the table below. As can be seen in the results below (Table 22) the pupils referred to a wider range of story aspects in their discussion on story than did the teachers.

Table 22. What makes a good story?

Attribute	What pupils say	What teachers say
Content (subject matter or plot)	✓	✓
Presentation	✓	✓
Visual support (pictures and so on)	✓	✓
Characters	✓	✓
Medium	✓	
Technical details (author/synopses/and so on)	✓	
Style (use of language/genre)	✓	✓
Gender appropriateness	✓	
Home-school links	✓	
Length	✓	
Age appropriateness	✓	✓

When the teachers were asked if their criteria for defining a story as 'good' ever varied, they noted that this would depend on the purpose for which the story was selected – some stories being regarded as better suited to particular purposes than others. One teacher said that 'A good story is a good story.' Another mentioned that 'Some stories are classics that transcend boundaries …', however on the whole it was clear that the notion of a 'good' story was dependent on the context in which it was used.

<u>What factors do you take into consideration when you are selecting stories for use in the classroom?</u>

Eight of the ten teachers mentioned subject matter or theme as being important in the selection of stories for classroom use, making this the most important factor for the teachers. This was closely followed by use of language, which seven of the ten teachers noted as important. Other factors mentioned (in order of number of references) were: children's interests, teachers' own interests, use of pictures, characters, author, popular or media interest, use of humour, and length. The issue of

age appropriateness was mentioned by two teachers, but is also implicit as one aspect of the way language is used, and one teacher elaborated on this when she said ‘appropriate level of language’. This statement was interpreted as referring to both age appropriateness and to language style. Story length was mentioned by two teachers, one of whom suggested that stories should be short in order to keep children’s attention, while the other said that children ‘sometimes enjoy a longer, serialised story’. As length was mentioned by only two of the teachers, it is clearly not a priority for them when selecting stories. The teachers’ comments were similar to those of the children – that is, there was no consensus, it all depends on the story.

What advice would you give inexperienced teachers when choosing stories to use in the classroom?

Half of the teachers interviewed emphasised the need to be familiar with any stories selected for classroom use – they noted that the teacher should read the story first (if in book form) so that she is completely aware of the content. This advice would presumably extend to other story formats – teachers using video or audio devices should also acquaint themselves with the content before presenting these to pupils. Two teachers noted that the enthusiasm of the teacher impacts on the success or otherwise of any story session, and that teachers should therefore select material which genuinely enthuses them if they are to engage pupil interest; two mentioned that the storyteller should not be afraid to adapt the language of the story where this might be challenging for the audience or by cutting the story if audience interest begins to wane. A further two

teachers suggested that children should not always be expected to work with stories, but should sometimes be allowed to enjoy stories 'for their own sake.'

Are there any kinds of stories which should be avoided?

Two of the teachers asked noted that they would not use 'scary' stories, and a further two mentioned the need to be aware of the emotional needs of the children in order to avoid selecting stories with potentially upsetting content. Language use was mentioned by two teachers – both poor use of language (although this was not defined) and complex language (which might be beyond the understanding of the audience). One teacher responded to this question by saying 'Is there such a thing?' She went on:

> *I'm sure there is! I think anything – showing them that there's such a wide range, I mean, I encourage parents, if their children are not keen readers, then to use comics or books that interest them …*

This response seemed to show that she had previously considered any type of story to be a positive experience. She mentions '…comics or books that interest them …' Comics are sometimes regarded as having a low literary value, and she refers to books 'that interest them' as distinct from books selected for the children by for example, a parent or teacher. After her initial, unconsidered response of 'Is there such a thing?' the teacher then corrected herself by saying 'I'm sure there is!' which was perhaps a slightly more considered reply to the question. The statement that followed seemed to be designed to explain her initial reply.

How can an inexperienced teacher get the best out of stories?

The teachers interviewed gave the following advice (listed in order of frequency of mentions):

- Read the story first: this reinforces the advice given in respect of selecting an appropriate story.
- Take time to enjoy the story: teachers are recognising the importance of the story form *for its own sake* (as noted previously by one teacher when asked for advice on selecting stories). As pointed out by Collins and Cooper (1997, p1), 'Storytelling is the commonality of all human beings, in all places, in all times.'
- Show enthusiasm: as noted previously, the enthusiasm of the teacher impacts on the success or otherwise of any story session.
- Follow the story up with some discussion or activity (but not always): although extending the pupils' engagement with the story through discussion or other related activity will often deepen understanding (Lauritzen and Jaeger, 1997), sometimes story is used simply to entertain (Collins and Cooper, 1997) .
- Use vocal expressions: this and the following three points take account of the 'performance' or presentation of the story. This was an aspect of storytelling which was well-recognised by the pupils who were asked to comment on 'what makes a good storyteller'.
- Make eye contact with the audience.
- Show the audience the book (if reading).
- Encourage audience participation where use of language allows (for example, in cases of repetition).

- Have the confidence to abandon the story if the audience shows lack of engagement. The ability to accurately measure and interpret signifiers of pupil engagement is a professional skill which develops with experience.
- Do not interrupt the story with questions. One of the reasons for suggesting this is that where pupils are engaged in the story, interruptions are intrusive and will break the pupils' focus.
- Repeat previously used stories. Children will construct a new understanding of the story from each retelling, as the prior knowledge they bring each time will have altered (Lauritzen and Jaeger, 1997).

As noted earlier, in spite of the fact that the literature review (2.5.2 p.72) emphasises the importance of the teacher's role in mediating metaphor and analogy in story in order to support learning goals, this was not an aspect on which the teachers interviewed offered much advice (see Appendix 14, p. 439). In fact, of eleven comments offered, only two related (indirectly) to this:

Make sure there is a good follow-up after the story so the children really think about what the story was about / Use the story to extend learning by basing a follow-up activity on the story.

As neither of these comments refer directly to metaphor/analogy, the view that this is indeed an aspect of teaching with story that these

teachers had even considered is speculative. Most of the teachers' advice centred on presentational skills.

Additional advice

When asked for additional advice, the teachers interviewed noted that stories should be used in a variety of contexts (in the classroom, outdoors, at home, and so on), and that time should be set aside for story – it should not be left to be 'slotted in' at the end of the day. This is an important point, as the consistent use of story as an end of day activity implies that the work of the day is over – this lessens the significance of story and suggests it is not as important as other aspects of the curriculum.

Summary of Teacher Interviews

Seven of the ten teachers interviewed showed a common understanding of story structure as consisting of a beginning, middle and end. This matches earlier definitions offered in Chapter Two. All of the teachers interviewed defined story in terms of a variety of media: none confined her definition to the written or spoken word. In defining a 'good' story for classroom use, teachers focussed on many similar attributes noted by pupils – content, characters, style, visuals and presentation.

Teachers also noted that attention should be given when selecting stories to the appropriateness of both content and language for the target audience. Much of the advice offered by teachers in respect of getting the best out of stories used in the classroom referred to the way stories are presented to pupils – to the performance aspects of storytelling.

Few teachers' comments related to the mediation of analogous aspects of story in order to support pupil understanding, and yet the literature suggests that this is an important part of the teacher's role when using story in support of learning.

4.4.2 Comparison of Results

There was a strong degree of consistency between the pupils' and the teachers' understanding of what makes a good story, see Table 22 (below). The themes listed are those derived from the pupil interviews, and used in the framework analysis of pupil responses.

Table 22. What makes a good story?

Attribute	What pupils say	What teachers say
Content (subject matter or plot)	✓	✓
Presentation	✓	✓
Visual support (pictures and so on)	✓	✓
Characters	✓	✓
Medium	✓	
Technical details (author/synopses/and so on)	✓	
Style (use of language/genre)	✓	✓
Gender appropriateness	✓	
Home-school links	✓	
Length	✓	
Age appropriateness	✓	✓

Both pupils and teachers showed an awareness of negative emotional factors which might impact on a story being regarded as unsuitable – children said they did not like 'scary' stories, and teachers said that they would not select 'scary' stories. This is quite interesting, as there is a commonly-held belief that children *do* like to be scared at times by stories. It is my contention that if we are to believe children when they say they *do* like something, then we must also respect their judgment

when they say they do *not.* Teachers do seem to take account of this in their decisions about what kind of stories to use. However, whether or not a particular story is 'scary' is subjective and the issue of the use of 'scary' stories is one which deserves further discussion. It may be that because they are aiming to appeal to the wider (class) audience, teachers are simply playing safe. Teachers also recognised that the content of some stories might be upsetting to certain children or groups of children. Gottschall (2012) notes that story formats encourage absorption, and it is this very absorption that heightens emotional responses, including fear. It might be argued that the classroom is not the appropriate context for exploring 'unsafe' emotions (those which might require support and nurturing, such as fear, distress, worry). The matter of appropriate contexts for story is a subject which might be explored in a further study.

Teachers rated use of language more highly in their priorities than pupils did, and for pupils the issue of gender–appropriateness was noted, while the teachers did not mention this at all. This does not necessarily mean that teachers disregard gender issues when selecting stories, it may be that they tend to select stories which will appeal to both boys and girls simultaneously.

Both pupils and teachers referred to the performance, or presentation, of stories, with pupils' responses showing recognition of teacher expertise in this area (compared with parents and other adults). Teachers emphasised the need for inexperienced practitioners to develop these presentational skills in order to enhance the story experience. Pupils and teachers alike were able to define the characteristics of a good

storyteller (see Table 23). Any mention of the characteristics listed is recorded.

Table 23. What makes a good storyteller?

Attribute	What pupils say	What teachers say
Clarity	✓	
Fluency	✓	
Expression	✓	✓
Eye contact with audience		✓
Attention to detail (ability to adapt, embellish or improvise on the story)	✓	✓
Audience interaction	✓	✓
Use of supporting materials (music, pictures, puppets, and so on)	✓	✓
Prior knowledge of the story		✓
Enthusiasm		✓
Fluidity (lack of interruption)		✓

As the table shows, there appear to be congruencies between the two groups (pupils and teachers) on the attributes shown by a good storyteller. Where there are differences (teachers do not note the need for clarity or fluency, for example), this may be due to the different contexts in which children meet storytelling. The storytellers children refer to as lacking these attributes tend to be parents or others rather than teachers (although there was at least one instance where a teacher was regarded as failing to meet these criteria).

Pupils remarked on the need for attention to detail – they did not like it when a storyteller missed out details or sections of a story that was known to them, while two teachers noted that the storyteller should be prepared to cut the story short if he feels the audience is losing interest. Although these comments may seem to be in opposition to each other, they both refer to a need for audience awareness – where the storyteller recognises that the audience is engaged, he may extend the story, or

where the audience shows a lack of interest, the story should be curtailed.

The three attributes mentioned by teachers to which children did not refer were prior knowledge of the story, enthusiasm and fluidity. The idea that the storyteller might not know what the story is about before presenting it may simply not have occurred to the pupils – the storyteller (whether a teacher, a parent or other) is in a position of power in the context of the storytelling session. He holds the 'knowledge' of the story, which is shared with the audience. Young children such as those who took part in this series of interviews do not tend to question the authority of those in such power relationships, and within the context of the Scottish primary school classroom they are certainly discouraged from doing so.

The need to show enthusiasm in presenting story is an issue which reflects on the teachers' professionalism. Primary school teachers in Scotland are responsible for the delivery of a whole curriculum as defined by national curriculum guidelines – currently the *Curriculum for Excellence* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009). If story is regarded as one way of delivering that curriculum (and although this is not explicitly stated in the national curriculum guidelines, the work of Lauritzen and Jaeger (1997) would suggest that it is part of *any* school curriculum) then it follows that teachers *are* responsible. Showing enthusiasm for the subject matter is one way teachers can motivate pupils.

The final attribute noted by teachers is the need to avoid interruptions to the story. A storytelling session might be interrupted by pupils due to lack of engagement. This can be addressed by audience awareness, mentioned above. Interruptions are sometimes made by the

teacher/storyteller herself. These can take the form of digression, or of intrusive questioning which impedes the flow of the story. This is a matter which further emphasises the need for audience awareness – questioning can be used to redirect audience attention, but it can also distract the audience and impede the flow of the story. This point, then, is a further call to teacher-storytellers to be responsive to the needs of the audience in the presentation of stories in the classroom.

4.4.3 Conclusions

Pupils and teachers both show an awareness of the factors that make a good story for classroom use, and both agree that the two most important factors are story content, and how it is presented. While pupils may be understandably unaware of the need for teacher support in mediating analogy in stories, it is surprising that none of the teachers explicitly addressed the subject when offering advice for novice teachers. This could be explained away as being a simple oversight on the part of these particular teachers. It might be that they do not do it at all, although this is unlikely.

Alternatively, it might be suggested that doing this is so deeply embedded in their practice that they are not explicitly aware of the techniques they are employing when supporting analogy in stories. If this is in fact the case, it is difficult to see how they might easily pass on this expertise. It is also difficult to develop or enhance a skill that you are unaware of using, and equally difficult to plan for learning to be derived from an approach employed in an unconsidered way.

Both pupils and teachers were very specific about the attributes of a good storyteller, noting a need for expressive delivery. The children focussed on the fine detail of this, offering a clear insight into their critical awareness of the craft of storytelling.

The issue of ‘scary’ stories came up, and it was noted that this might be an area for future investigation. Similarly, and in some ways related to this, the idea that contexts might have an impact on story selection was also noted as an area for further study.

Finally, there is a call for responsiveness in the presentation of stories in the classroom which can be addressed by an increased emphasis on audience awareness.

4.5. PART 5: NATIONAL SURVEY

The purpose of the last part of the empirical study was to gather information which would be more representative of practice across Scotland as a whole. This survey was based on the teacher questionnaire used in Part 2, and was modified in response to feedback (see 3.4.27, p.181). It was delivered in electronic format (see Appendix 17, p.445).

4.5.1. Results

Response Pattern by Local Education Authority:

As noted above, a total of 728 responses was received, and these came from across all but one of the LEAs. Inverclyde, the LEA that is not represented in the data collection, covers the Gourock and Port Glasgow area west of Paisley. Adjoining LEAs are Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire, and 26 responses were received from these (see Table 24 below).

Table 24. Number of respondents listed by local education authority

Local Education Authority	% of total responses	No. of responses	Local Education Authority	% of total responses	No. of responses
ABERDEEN CITY	5.1	37	INVERCLYDE	0	0
ABERDEENSHIRE	1.9	14	MIDLOTHIAN	3.0	22
ANGUS	5.6	41	MORAY	4.3	32
ARGYLL & BUTE	4.6	34	NORTH AYRSHIRE	2.7	20
CLACKMANNAN-SHIRE	1.1	8	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	4.3	32
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY	1.6	12	ORKNEY ISLANDS	1.6	12
DUNDEE CITY	9.8	72	PERTH & KINROSS	6.5	48
EAST AYRSHIRE	1.7	13	RENFREWSHIRE	2.6	19
EAST DUNBARTON-SHIRE	0.8	6	SCOTTISH BORDERS	2.1	15
EAST LOTHIAN	1.4	10	SHETLAND ISLANDS	2.8	21
EAST RENFREWSHIRE	1.6	12	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	1.4	10
EDINBURGH CITY	4.6	34	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE	1.7	13
FALKIRK	3.5	26	STIRLING	2.3	17
FIFE	8.5	62	WEST DUNBARTON-SHIRE	1.5	11
GLASGOW CITY	3.9	29	WEST LOTHIAN	3.1	23
HIGHLAND	1.2	9	WESTERN ISLES	1.9	14

The number of teacher responses ranged from 6 in East Dunbartonshire to 72 in Dundee.

Dundee is an LEA with a close working relationship with the University of Dundee. The School of Education uses Dundee schools for professional student placement on the B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education), M.A. (Master of Arts) with Qualified Teacher Status, and P.G.D.E (P) (Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) courses. The other local authorities with closest links to the University of Dundee are Fife (62 responses), Perth and Kinross (48 responses) and Angus (41).

The University of Dundee School of Education also sends students on professional placement to schools in these authorities. Together, teacher responses from these four authorities represent 30% of the returns. These authorities comprise 318 out of 2121 schools in Scotland, that is, 14.9% of the total number of schools in the country. These four LEAs, then, are over-represented in the data collected. However, other LEAs with no particular connection to the University of Dundee compare well with these in terms of response rate. Aberdeen City, for example, with no obvious connection to the University of Dundee, and with only 54 schools, returned 37 individual responses. This compares favourably with the Fife response (above) of 62 teachers. Fife has a total of 143 schools.

Respondents did not all elect to name their schools, with some opting to remain anonymous. The three named schools returning most data were Newtongrange (Midlothian Council), Papdale (Orkney) and Seaview (Angus), each of which returned six questionnaires. Most of the other results where schools were named were single responses from individual schools across the country.

Response Pattern by teaching experience and gender:

Table 25. Number of responses by years of teaching experience

Teaching experience (in years)	Percentage of total responses	Number of responses
NQT*	5.5%	40
1-5	17.9%	130
6-10	17.4%	127
11-15	15.8%	115
16+	43.4%	316

*Newly Qualified Teacher, that is, a teacher in the first year of teaching since completing an Initial Teacher Education Course (at the time this study took place, this was either a B.Ed. degree or P.G.D.E.(P) qualification).

According to government statistics (Scottish Government, 2011), 5% of all primary teachers were in their NQT year at the time of the teacher census most recently available at the time of writing, taken one year before the data for this part of the study were collected. The number of NQTs represented by this part of the study is in line with this. Government data do not show any other information in respect of number of years of teaching experience.

Table 26. Number of responses by gender

Gender	*Percentage of total responses*	*Number of responses*
male	*9.5%*	*69*
female	*90.5%*	*659*

The same source (Scottish Government, 2011) indicates that 8% of the primary teaching workforce in Scotland was male, compared with 9.5% of the number of respondents to the survey. Again, this would appear to suggest that the sample in this study was broadly representative of the population from which it was drawn.

Story in the classroom

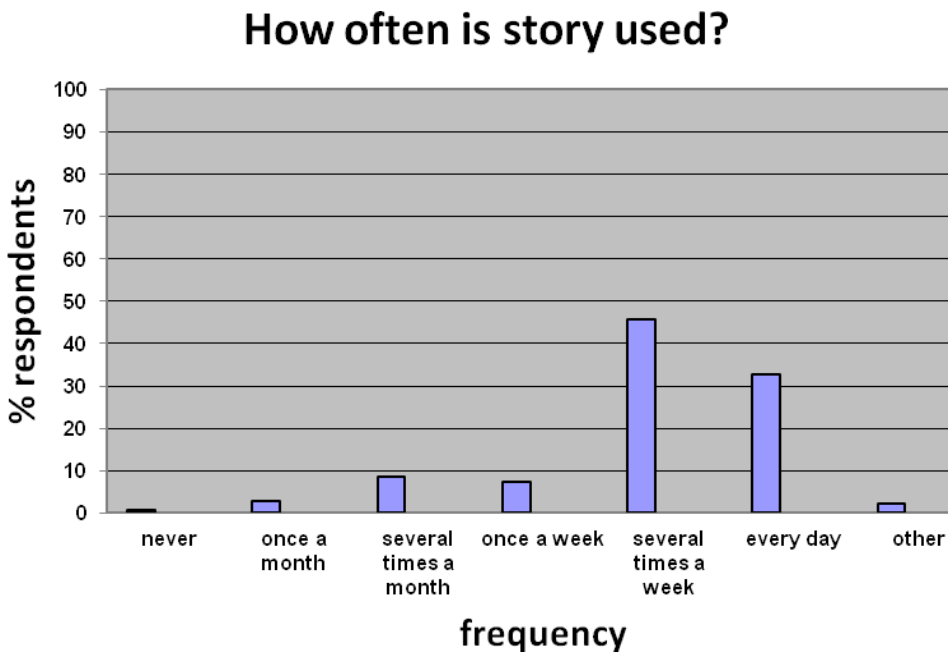


Figure 12. Frequency of story use

In response to the question 'How often is story used in your classroom?', 45.7% of respondents said they used story several times a week, and 32.7% used it every day. Only 0.7% of teachers who took part in the survey said they never used story in their classrooms.

As often as possible - - non teaching post!
At least every day and often throughout the day in various lessons.
Dependent on topic
Depends on focus of that block
Depends on needs of children- varies radically
Depends on the topic
Every day as a group activity but also read to small groups or individuals as required throughout the day
I teach P.E. it doesn't lend itself to story. I often tell a short story about someone who.....
It depends on the current topic.
Nursery once a week by myself and everyday by the nursery nurse. In P3-7 whole class once a week and twice a week for literacy circles.
Use story at least every day and often throughout the day in various lessons.
Varies according to topics and themes or book studies
We have a class novel which I read daily. Once a term we do a novel study.
We tend to do novel studies, one each term. The children also have individual reading books as we have the Accelerated Reading scheme.
When teaching I made an effort to read to my class every day but this depended on what other things were happening in school and at what stage I was teaching. Early Years tended to be where the use of story was more dominant.
Whenever I have a whole class, rather than groups.

Figure 12. Further comments re frequency of story use

As can be seen in Figure 12 (above), those teachers who responded ‘other’ to the question about frequency of story use had varied patterns of usage. Of the 16 teachers who commented, 7 have noted that story use varies or is dependent on the needs of the children, or curricular foci. A further three of the comments refer to using story in novel studies or literacy circles. This would suggest a purposeful rather than an indiscriminate use of story in the classroom, with teachers selecting stories according to pre-determined aims.

How are stories used in the classroom?

Respondents were asked to identify how stories are mostly used in their classrooms. 85.2% (620 respondents) noted that they mostly tell stories orally from memory, or by reading from a book, while only 8.1% (59 respondents) reported that they mostly use electronic media in the form of (for example) video, film, and CD-ROM. 6.7% (49) respondents noted that they mostly use a combination of oral and electronic media. None of the teachers in the national survey mentioned any storytelling media in their comments other than the two (oral and electronic) that were specified in the question.

Sources

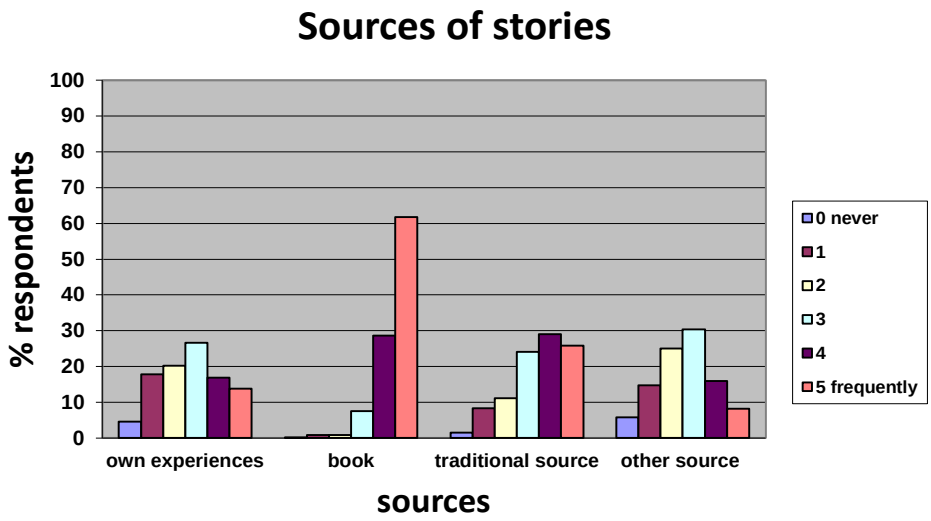


Figure 14. Sources of stories used in the classroom (national survey)

Respondents were asked 'How often do you use the following?' about a selection of sources of the stories they used in the classroom (see Figure 14above). The pattern of responses in respect of the use of books

as a source stands out here. It shows a clear positive skew, with 61.8% of respondents selecting ‘frequently’ (5 on the rating scale) in response to that option, while the responses to the other sources listed were more evenly spread. Only 0.1% of respondents said they ‘never’ used books as a source of stories in their classrooms. In respect of traditional sources of stories (this would include oral retellings of folk tales, fairy tales and myths) 79% of respondents selected ratings of 3-5.

Genres

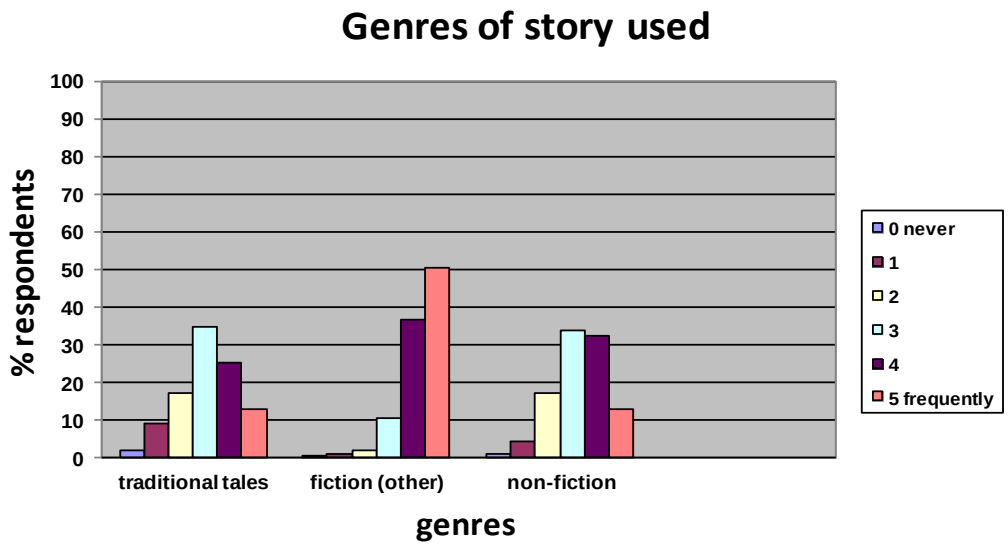


Figure 15. Genres of story used (national survey)

When teachers were asked how often they used particular genres of story (see figure 15 above) in their classrooms, 50.4% of those responding noted that they use other fiction ‘frequently’ (5 on the rating scale) in their classrooms. That figure rises to 63.1% when traditional tales and other types of fiction are combined, and is even higher when responses in category 4 are added. 1.5% (10 teachers) never use

traditional tales, and 0.4% (3 teachers) never use either traditional tales or other types of fiction.

The number of respondents noting use of other genres of story not previously listed is recorded in Table 27 below.

Table 27. Teachers' use of unlisted genres of story

Genre	**No. of responses**
Poetry	63
News stories/current affairs	15
Pupils' own imaginative stories	11
Comics/graphic novels	7
Drama scripts/plays	7
Video /film	7
Online resources	6
Scots language	5
Issues-based stories	4
Audio	3
Sci-fi	3
Personal anecdote	2
Song	2
Teachers' own imaginative stories	2
Biographies	1
Picture books	1

As can be seen from the above table, the most commonly noted genre other than those listed in the survey is poetry, with 63 respondents (8.6%) referring to this. This is perhaps a lower number than might be expected, however it is possible that teachers may regard poetry as a genre distinct from story. What can be seen from the above comments is that a total of 139 teachers (19%) referred to genres of stories additional to those listed. Closer inspection of the comments would suggest that most of these could in fact have been included in the categories offered by the questionnaire: news and current affairs, for example, are clearly 'non-fiction', and sci-fi is a sub-genre of 'fiction (other)'. It is not clear why

teachers may have elected to list the genres above separately from those offered in the questionnaire.

Story Selection

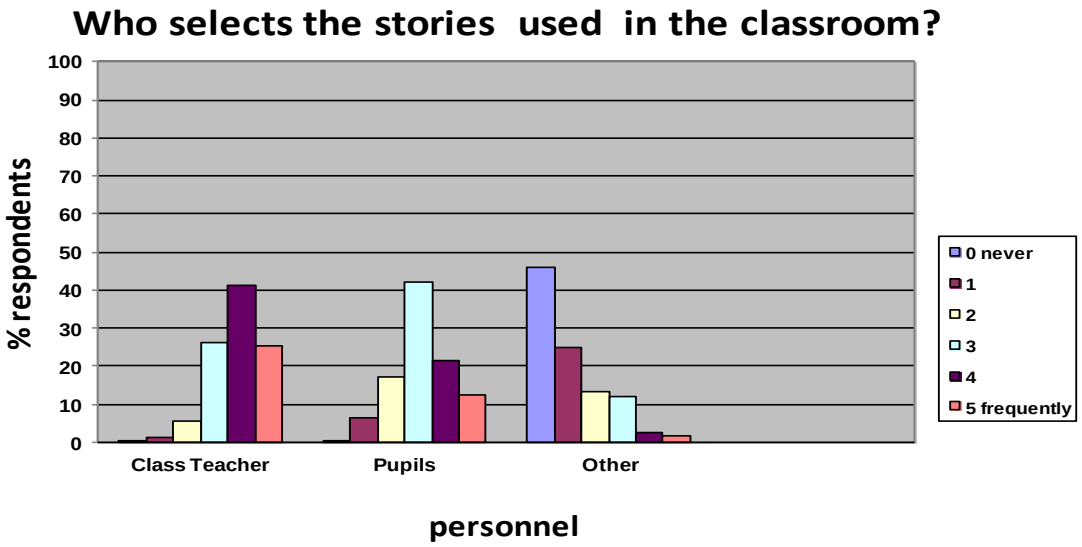


Figure 16. Who selects stories for classroom use (national survey)?

The figure above shows that 25.3% of the respondents noted that class teachers 'frequently' (5 on the scale) select the stories used in the classroom. A total of 93% of the respondents selected ratings of 3, 4 and 5, indicating that on most occasions where story is used in the classroom teachers themselves are responsible for the selection. 12.4% of respondents noted that pupils 'frequently' select the stories and this figure rises to 75% of respondents who noted that pupils select stories in the

ratings range 3-5. Almost half of all respondents (46%) said that other personnel ‘never’ select stories for use in the respondents’ classrooms.

The table below shows other personnel identified by the respondents who select stories for use in the classroom, along with the number of times each is referred to.

Table 28. Others who select stories for classroom use.

Others selecting stories for classroom use	**No. of responses**
School management	46
Visitor	43
Parents	41
Classroom assistant	41
Other teaching staff	37
Support staff	27
Students	13
Supply teachers	13
Other pupils	5

‘School management’ includes the Senior Management Team of the school (Head Teacher, Depute and Principal Teacher) and Local Authority personnel (for example, Advisers and Staff Tutors). As can be seen above, this was the group most frequently identified by the respondents, closely followed by visitors to the school. ‘Visitors’ includes visiting storytellers and authors, school librarians, and school chaplains. Also included in this group are live web links with authors. This indicates a range of influences on the selection of stories used in the classroom, although, as can be seen, these do tend to be personnel directly connected to schools themselves.

Purposes and Aims for Story Use

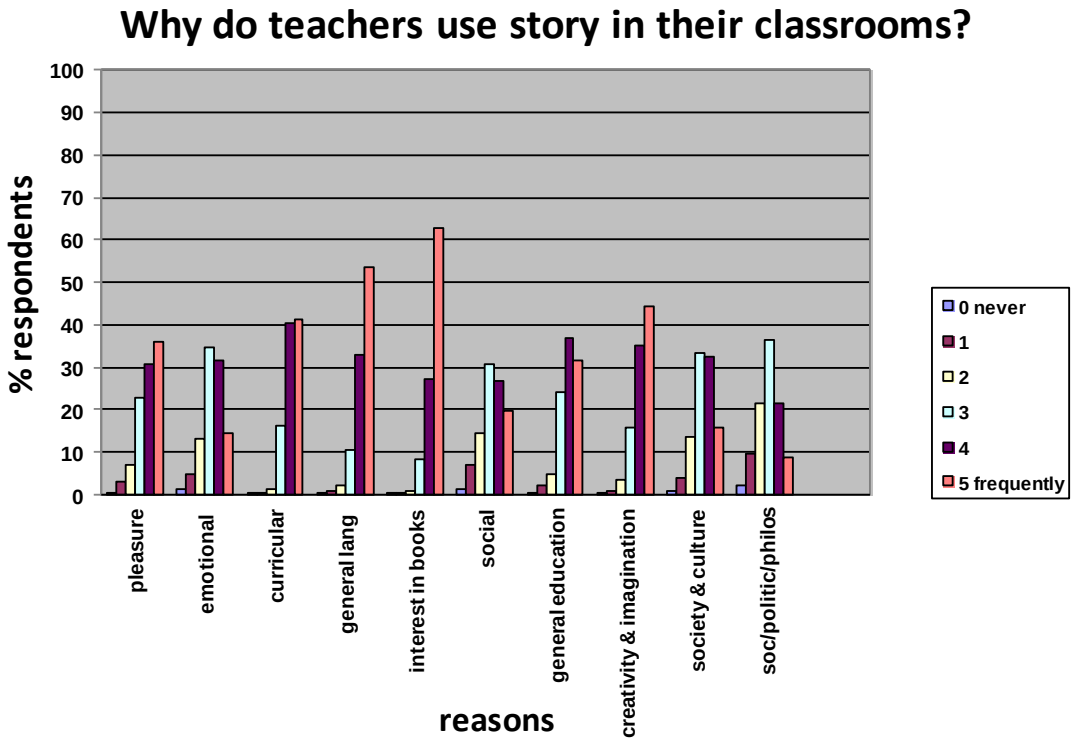


Figure 17. Teachers' reasons for using story (national survey)

62.7% of respondents selected the promotion of an interest in books and literature at 5 (frequently) on the rating scale while 53.4% of respondents selected a rating of 5 in respect of general language development. In the case of teachers who cited 'other' reasons (see Appendix 19 p.454), 17 of the comments referred to language- and/or book/literacy- related reasons (for example, 'as a basis for storywriting', 'as a stimulus for discussion'). One teacher mentioned using story for 'behavioural' reasons, and four suggested that story provides an opportunity for calm in the classroom. Of the comments provided by

teachers in the category of ‘other reasons not listed’, many refer to complex rather than simple one-dimensional rationales. For example, the response ‘As a basis for storywriting’ could potentially link to all of the rationales offered, depending on subject-matter and stimulus.

Influences on Story Selection

In order to provide supplementary information about how teachers select stories, respondents were asked to note whether their story choices have been influenced by any of a range of identified personnel and professional/non-professional bodies.

Table 29. Influences on story choices

Have your story choices been influenced by any of the following (select all that apply)	**No. of responses**
Professional recommendation (colleagues, staff tutors, etc):	554
Personal recommendation(family, friends, etc):	531
Library Service:	362
CPD:	305
Scholastic Book Fairs:	276
Newspapers/magazines:	272
Current TV programmes or cinema releases:	248
Published programmes of work (eg Telling Tales, Stories for Thinking, Bounceback recommended texts):	227
Professional reviews (eg in TES, Scholastic publications):	225
Scottish Storytelling Centre links (courses, visits, website):	160
Local Theatre Projects (eg Pantomimes, book-based children's productions):	151
BBC/C4 Learning Units (TV or audio):	111
Education Scotland (formerly LTS):	109
Other *(please specify)*:	81
Total no. responses	3612

The results (see Table 29 above) show that the two greatest single influences on teachers when selecting stories are professional and personal recommendation. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Library Service were the next most influential factors on teachers in terms of story choices. While there are some external providers of CPD for teachers (some of these are referred to below) both of these services are most usually provided by the LEA itself.

Table 30 on p.289 shows the number of teachers in each LEA , expressed as a percentage of the responses, who indicated that their story choices were influenced by CPD or Library Services. As can be seen from the table, North Ayrshire, Falkirk, Angus, Dundee City and Orkney Islands were the LEAs which had the greatest number of teachers citing the influences of CPD and Library Services on their story choices. The results show that less than one quarter of the responses in these 'top' five LEAs noted the LEA as being influential in this way, and for the other LEAs in the country, the results are lower than this. Teachers from Clackmannanshire and Highland Council, for example, noted these influences in only 10% of the responses, indicating that 90% of the teachers who responded were not influenced by CPD or Library Services. These results suggest that LEA influence on teachers' story selection is very limited. The Scottish Storytelling Centre, local theatre education projects, and Education Scotland also provide CPD for teachers in addition to resources, links, contacts and references. Only 3-4% of responses to the survey cited these, indicating that their influence on teachers in respect of story choice is minimal.

Table 30. LEA influences on story choices

Local Education Authority	CPD (1)	Library Service (2)	Total no. returns (3)	(1)+(2) shown as % of (3)
North Ayrshire	13	14	110	24%
Falkirk	17	19	156	23%
Angus	21	23	192	23%
Dundee City	35	43	352	22%
Orkney Islands	5	10	64	23%
Aberdeen City	18	19	184	20%
Renfrewshire	13	9	106	20%
East Ayrshire	7	8	79	19%
East Lothian	3	6	47	19%
Moray	7	13	106	19%
Shetland Islands	8	12	107	19%
Edinburgh City	16	19	194	18%
Fife	33	35	381	18%
Perth & Kinross	19	29	266	18%
South Lanarkshire	4	8	72	17%
Stirling	9	8	99	17%
Western Isles	2	10	69	17%
Aberdeenshire	6	9	91	16%
Argyll & Bute	16	12	173	16%
East Dunbartonshire	2	2	25	16%
South Ayrshire	4	4	51	16%
East Renfrewshire	6	1	46	15%
Midlothian	6	10	104	15%
North Lanarkshire	9	14	150	15%
W. Dunbartonshire	5	2	48	14%
Dumfries & Galloway	3	4	52	13%
Glasgow City	9	10	142	13%
Scottish Borders	5	5	75	13%
Clackmannanshire	3	1	38	10%
Highland	1	3	41	10%
Inverclyde	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

‘Other’ influences noted by respondents were pupils (19 respondents referred to this); browsing in online or traditional bookshops (15 references); Scottish Book Trust (7 references); GLOW (Education

Scotland Schools' Portal) (2 references). The remaining references either fell into one of the categories already noted in Table 30 above, or else referred back to the teacher herself.

How are the stories selected?

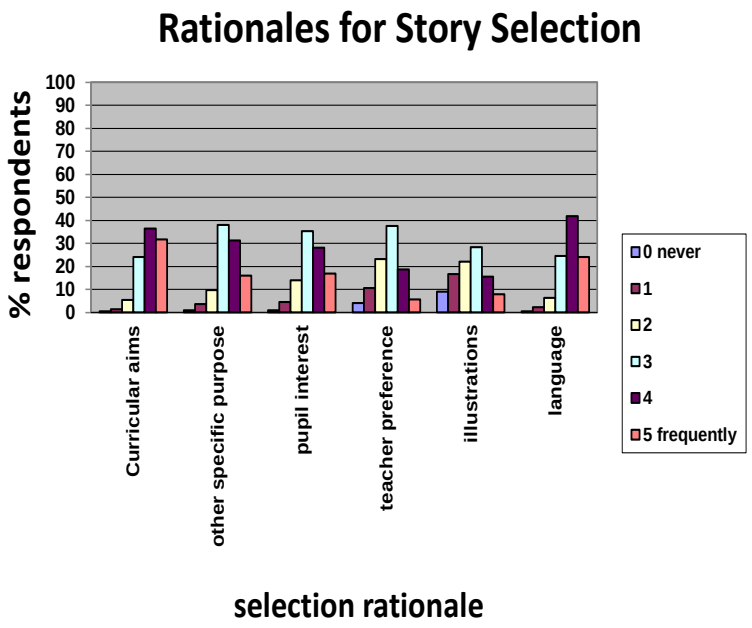


Figure 18. How stories are selected (national survey)

In response to the question, 'How are stories selected for use in your classroom?', 31.7% of respondents stated that they 'frequently' (5 on the scale) chose stories to meet curricular aims. Only 0.4% (6 teachers) stated that they 'never' (0 on the scale) selected stories for this purpose.

Both ‘teacher preference’ and ‘attractiveness of illustrations’ have a spread of responses associated with a normal curve of distribution, suggesting that these rationales, while evident across the sample population, are neither particularly popular nor unpopular choices. The weighting of responses to the other choices falls mainly in the 3-5 bracket, suggesting these are favourably indicated as rationales for story selection.

Many of the ‘other’ reasons for selecting particular stories listed by respondents were related to curricular aims (see Appendix 19, p.454) Reference was made to author (this was mentioned by four respondents), length of story, and interactive nature of book (the example offered was ‘lift-the-flap’ books).

Measuring effectiveness – has the story met its purpose?

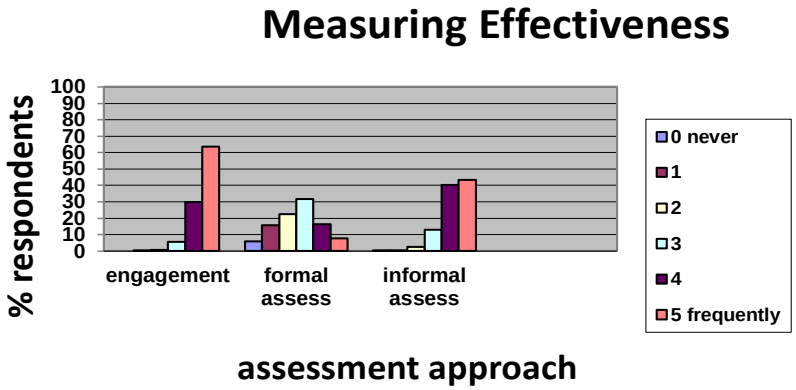


Figure 19. How do teachers measure success (national survey)?

Respondents were asked 'Does it work? How do you evaluate whether or not the story has met your purposes?' 63.6% of respondents noted that they 'frequently' (5 on the scale) measure success by pupil engagement. This response stood out from the others, and when taken together, pupil engagement was rated 4-5 on the scale by 93.4% of the respondents. No respondents rated this option as 'never' (0 on the scale), and only 1 respondent rated this option 1 on the scale.

The spread of teachers using formal means of assessment shows a normal distribution curve, with 5.9% noting that they 'never' use this (0 on the scale) , and 7.9% at the other end of the scale noting they use it

'frequently' (5 on the scale). In respect of informal means of assessment, 83.7% of respondents rated this option as 4-5 on the rating scale.

'Other' means of assessment noted by respondents listed in Appendix 19 (p.454) describe some of the formal and informal methods used by respondents, and include combinations of these.

4.5.2. Patterns of story use

Frequency

In response to the question 'How often is story used in your classroom?' there were areas of consistency – for example, in respect of how often teachers with varying years of teaching experience use story in their classrooms, and also in respect of how often male and female teachers use story. The modal figures in the tables which follow are shaded to show the patterns of classroom use of story.

Table 31. National Survey - teaching experience/frequency of story use.

5. How often is story used in your classroom?	**NQT**	**1-5**	**5-10**	**10-15**	**15+**
NEVER	1	1	0	0	3
ONCE A MONTH	2	9	4	3	2
SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH	3	11	11	8	30
ONCE A WEEK	3	15	8	5	22
SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK	22	61	55	55	140
EVERY DAY	9	32	46	41	110
Other	0	1	3	3	9
Totals	40	130	127	115	316

The results show that the pattern of response was very similar in all groups. Most teachers use story frequently and the respondents

overwhelmingly favoured several times a week or every day (there is a positive skew to the patterns of response for each group of teachers). The modal figure suggest several times a week, but the figure for every day is a close second in frequency.

Table 32. National Survey – gender/frequency of story use.

5. How often is story used in your classroom?	**MALE**	**FEMALE**
NEVER	0	5
ONCE A MONTH	9	11
SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH	8	55
ONCE A WEEK	5	48
SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK	32	301
EVERY DAY	14	224
Other	1	15
Totals	69	659

The results show that the pattern of response for males and females is similar. It may be reasonably concluded that male and female teachers do not seem to differ in terms of how frequently they use story.

When the results to the question ‘How often is story used in your classroom?’ were cross-tabulated by stage, however, some variation was found.

Table 33. National Survey – stage/frequency of story use

5. How often is story used in your classroom?	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
NEVER	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
ONCE A MONTH	1	1	1	1	2	4	3
SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH	0	3	7	5	6	5	6
ONCE A WEEK	1	3	5	4	6	10	9
SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK	25	15	31	34	27	32	23
EVERY DAY	51	31	21	14	9	11	12
Other	0	1	0	2	0	0	2
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that teachers in P1-2 tend to use stories most frequently, with the majority of teachers using story every day. Starting from P3, teachers tend to use story less frequently, a pattern that continues as the children get older. From P3 to P7, most teachers report using story several times a week, rather than daily.

Table 34. National Survey – LEA/frequency of story use

4. Please indicate the LEA for which you work	NEVER	ONCE A MONTH	SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH	ONCE A WEEK	SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK	EVERY DAY
ABERDEEN CITY	0	1	1	6	16	14
ABERDEENSHIRE	0	1	2	0	8	4
ANGUS	0	5	4	5	19	8
ARGYLL & BUTE	0	1	8	2	18	6
CLACKMANNANSHIRE	0	0	0	1	6	1
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY	0	1	1	0	6	5
DUNDEE CITY	1	2	8	5	30	25
E. AYRSHIRE	1	0	2	2	5	4
E. DUNBARTON	0	1	0	1	3	1
E. LOTHIAN	0	0	0	2	7	1
E. RENFREWSHIRE	0	1	1	2	7	1
EDINBURGH CITY	0	0	3	1	14	17
FALKIRK	0	1	2	2	14	6
FIFE	1	0	3	2	24	33
GLASGOW CITY	0	1	0	4	9	16
HIGHLAND	0	0	0	2	6	1
INVERCLYDE	0	0	0	0	0	0
MIDLOTHIAN	0	0	0	0	9	14
MORAY	0	1	5	0	18	5
N. AYRSHIRE	1	0	1	5	6	8
N. LANARKSHIRE	0	1	6	2	14	10
ORKNEY ISLANDS	0	0	0	0	10	2
PERTH & KINROSS	1	2	3	3	26	12
RENFREWSHIRE	0	0	3	1	8	7
SCOTTISH BORDERS	0	0	0	0	7	8
SHETLAND ISLES	0	0	0	1	13	8
S. AYRSHIRE	0	0	1	1	3	3
S. LANARKSHIRE	0	0	2	0	5	6
STIRLING	0	0	2	2	11	3
W. DUNBARTON	0	0	2	1	5	4
WESTERN ISLES	0	1	3	0	6	5
Totals	5	20	63	53	333	238

The results in Table 31 above show that there is little evidence of much variation in practice across the local authorities: the overwhelming majority of teachers in all LEAs tend to use story several times a week or every day, with teachers in Edinburgh City, Fife, Glasgow City, Midlothian, North and South Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and the Scottish Borders tending to use story more often than in other LEAs. Individual teachers in Dundee City, East Ayrshire, Fife, North Ayrshire, Perth and Kinross report that story is never used in their classrooms

Summary

Over all the findings here indicate that patterns in frequency of story use are similar across a range of variables. In terms of teaching experience and gender, the pattern of scores was very similar. While there was some variation in terms of the geographical location, this was small. The one analysis where a clear picture of different trends emerged was in terms of stage, where it was clear that teachers in P1-2 indicated that they used story more frequently than at other stages.

Other patterns

In order to investigate whether there were any further differences in story use across the primary stages and LEAs, other aspects of the data were examined.

Patterns by stage

Cross-tabulations were made by stage and story media, sources, genres, persons selecting stories, purpose, influences, rationale, and evaluation.

Presentation

Teachers were asked, ‘How are stories used in your classroom?’ As with the previous section, the modal figures which follow are shaded to show the pattern of classroom use of story, and these are cross-tabulated by stage.

Table 35. National Survey – stage/media

PRESENTATIONAL MEDIA 6. Are these stories mostly	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
oral (from memory or read from books)	69	49	51	56	44	55	43
electronic (video/film/CD rom/etc)	4	3	9	4	5	3	10
Other	5	2	5	1	1	4	2
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results above show that teachers tend to use stories in oral form rather than other media, and this seems consistent across all stages.

Sources

Teachers were asked ‘How often do you use the following as sources for your stories?’ In this analysis, and those that follow, respondents were asked to use a rating scale from 0-5, where 0 = never and 5=frequently.

Table 36. National Survey – stage/ stories from own experiences

SOURCES OF STORIES USED 7.Own experiences	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	5	1	5	3	4	3	2
1	17	10	7	13	10	17	8
2	14	9	13	9	15	7	7
3	20	16	15	13	10	15	13
4	8	7	14	7	5	6	12
5 (frequently)	9	5	9	8	2	8	9
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The table above shows that most teachers chose a mid-rating figure of 3, with teachers in P5-6 using stories from their own experiences less often than at other stages. Teachers in P4 split their responses between 1 and 3 on the rating scale indicating a considerable variation at that particular stage.

Table 37. National Survey – stage/stories from books

SOURCES OF STORIES USED 8.Book	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
1	3	1	0	0	1	0	0
2	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
3	1	2	2	2	5	9	4
4	13	15	19	11	14	16	27
5 (frequently)	56	29	40	40	26	31	19
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Results here show that most teachers in classes P1-6 tend to use stories from books frequently (5 on the scale). Although teachers in P7

tend to use stories from books slightly less frequently (4 on the scale), at each stage there is a strong positive skew to the pattern of responses. This indicates that as a source for stories, books are the most popular choice among all teachers, regardless of the stage at which they teach.

Table 38. National Survey – stage/stories from traditional sources

SOURCES OF STORIES USED 9. Traditional sources e.g. word of mouth	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	2	1	1	0	1	2	2
1	5	2	3	3	8	8	5
2	7	5	4	7	8	8	8
3	17	10	13	16	10	11	17
4	15	14	26	15	14	18	15
5 (frequently)	27	16	16	12	5	9	4
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Table 38 shows that most teachers in classes P1 and P2 tend to use traditional stories frequently (5 on the scale). In contrast, teachers of older children tended to rate this source of story slightly less frequently.

Table 39. National Survey – stage/stories from other sources

SOURCES OF STORIES USED **10. Other source**	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
0 (never)	5	3	3	3	6	4	2
1	7	2	9	12	6	9	9
2	15	16	18	15	9	14	22
3	28	16	16	14	18	15	11
4	9	8	12	8	5	9	5
5 (frequently)	9	3	5	1	2	5	2
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

These results show that most teachers at all stages tend to use stories from other sources at a frequency rating of 2 or 3 on the scale.

Summary

Generally speaking, teachers tend to use stories from books most frequently, followed by stories from traditional sources, their own experiences and other sources. The differences that were apparent were that P1 and P2 teachers tend to use stories from traditional sources most often, with teachers in classes P4 and P7 tending to use stories from traditional sources least often

Genres

Teachers were asked, ‘How often do you use the following types of story?’

Table 40. National Survey – stage/ traditional genres.

GENRES OF STORIES USED 11. Traditional tales/myths/folklore	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
1	3	3	2	6	9	10	6
2	9	4	6	6	16	12	13
3	21	19	27	22	14	24	19
4	22	10	24	16	5	8	9
5 (frequently)	18	12	3	3	2	1	2
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that teachers at most stages selected a middle ranking (between two anchor terms), often 3 on the rating scale. While teachers in P1 tend to use traditional stories more often than other stages, teachers in P5 tend to use traditional stories less often.

Table 41. National Survey – stage/ fiction (other)

GENRES OF STORIES USED 12. Fiction (other)	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1
3	6	5	9	2	5	4	9
4	19	14	30	20	21	20	18
5 (frequently)	45	28	22	31	19	30	23
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

This table shows that teachers at all stages overwhelmingly favoured ratings of 4 or 5 on the scale, with most teachers tending to use other fiction frequently (5 on the scale). This indicates that fiction is a popular choice of story genre across all stages. If this result is combined with the results from Table 33 (p.295), it can be seen that fiction read from books is the most frequently used combination of genre and source at all stages in the school, regardless of age group.

Table 42. National Survey – stage/non-fiction

GENRES OF STORIES USED 13. Non-fiction (inc history and religious stories)	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
1	6	4	2	1	3	1	1
2	13	14	11	10	5	3	8
3	23	9	26	19	16	18	15
4	24	14	20	15	14	22	18
5 (frequently)	7	7	3	7	8	12	9
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results above show that most teachers selected 3 or 4 on the rating scale with teachers at either end of the primary school (P1-2 and P6-7) indicating more frequent use of non-fiction than those in the middle stages (P3-5). However, closer inspection of the figures shows that the results follow a normal curve of distribution, suggesting an even spread of results, with most teachers selecting a mid-ranking position between 'never' and 'frequently'.

Summary

The genre rated most highly was other fiction, followed by non-fiction and traditional stories. There was considerable similarity in the patterns, although P1 teachers tend to use traditional stories more frequently (5 on the scale) than teachers in other stages.

Selection

Teachers were asked, 'Who selects the stories you use in your classroom?'

Table 43. National Survey – stage/stories selected by Class teacher

STORIES SELECTED BY: 15. Class teacher	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
1	1	2	0	0	1	1	1
2	6	0	3	2	2	4	4
3	17	16	19	7	11	15	11
4	26	17	24	27	20	23	22
5 (frequently)	23	13	15	17	12	13	13
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Table 43 above shows a strong positive skew; teachers themselves tend to select the stories they use in their classrooms at a frequency rating of 4 on the scale. This is consistent across all stages. If responses rated 4 and 5 are added, it can be seen that a total of 62%, well over half of all the teachers who responded, noted that they select the stories used in their classrooms at these levels of frequency.

Table 44. National Survey – stage/ stories selected by pupils

STORIES SELECTED BY: 16. Pupils	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
1	3	0	2	9	2	4	5
2	4	9	9	9	16	18	8
3	29	17	31	17	21	20	27
4	18	14	13	14	6	12	7
5 (frequently)	19	8	7	4	1	2	4
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Although again there is a positive skew to the results, the modal figure is rather more central. Most teachers report that pupils select stories at a frequency rating of 3 on the scale. This pattern applies to all stages.

Table 45. National Survey – stage/ stories selected by others

STORIES SELECTED BY: 17. Other	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	31	24	25	26	26	28	25
1	18	8	21	11	10	17	17
2	10	11	11	11	6	3	3
3	11	5	4	4	4	7	5
4	3	0	2	1	0	1	0
5 (frequently)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other	5	6	2	8	4	6	4
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Most teachers report that people other than themselves or pupils never select the stories used in their classrooms. This is consistent across all stages taught, although this number accounts for less than half of the total number of teachers who responded, indicating that more than half of the teachers who responded do use stories selected by others in their

classrooms from time to time, even though this may not be a common occurrence.

Summary

Over all, the results show that teachers tend to choose stories themselves most of the time, and while pupils are sometimes involved, it is rare for others to select the stories.

Purposes/Aims

Teachers were asked, 'Why do you use story in your classroom?'.

Table 46. National Survey – stage /stories for pleasure

PURPOSE/AIMS OF STORY 19. Purely for pleasure/enjoyment/entertainment	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
1	1	1	2	1	2	3	1
2	6	2	3	7	4	5	3
3	10	11	16	9	7	17	15
4	14	10	26	13	19	17	14
5 (frequently)	38	21	14	22	12	11	16
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that teachers from all stages tend to use stories for pleasure at a frequency rating of between 4 and 5 on the scale, with almost half of all P1 teachers selecting 5 (frequently). This means that more than half of the P1 teachers who responded use stories for reasons other than simple pleasure or entertainment, and the proportion of teachers at other stages who use stories in a similar way is even higher.

This is not to say that these teachers may not include pleasure as *one* of the criteria when selecting stories: they were asked to comment on how frequently this was the *sole* criterion (the wording of the question was '*purely* for pleasure/enjoyment/entertainment').

Table 47. National Survey – stage/stories to explore emotional issues

PURPOSE/AIMS OF STORY 20. To help explore emotional issues	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	1	2	1	1
1	2	1	4	5	6	2	2
2	5	3	10	14	7	10	5
3	23	18	22	16	19	17	14
4	22	18	18	13	9	17	20
5 (frequently)	17	5	7	3	2	6	7
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that teachers at all stages tend to use stories to explore emotional issues with a frequency rating of 3 on the scale. Although this rises to 4 in P2 and P6-7, indicating that teachers in these stages use them for this purpose more frequently, the difference between 3 and 4 is particularly small in P1, and in P3 and 4 amounts to a difference of only 7 teachers out of a possible 126. The pattern across all stages appears to be broadly similar, with a slight positive skew that is more pronounced at the P1 stage.

Table 48. National Survey – stage/ stories to support curricular aims

PURPOSE/AIMS OF STORY 21. To support curricular aims	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
2	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
3	12	8	8	11	8	7	8
4	18	17	30	22	22	21	18
5 (frequently)	38	20	22	18	13	24	22
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show a positive skew, that teachers at all stages tend to use stories to support curricular aims at a rating towards the frequent end of the scale. Teachers in P1-2 and P6-7 tend to use stories for this purpose more frequently than those at other stages.

Table 49. National Survey – stage/ stories to support general language development

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. Support general language development	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
2	3	0	1	2	1	0	3
3	6	6	3	10	9	5	4
4	13	12	27	22	16	22	20
5 (frequently)	46	27	30	18	19	25	20
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that although not absolutely consistent at every stage, most teachers tend to use stories to support general language development frequently (5 on the scale)

Table 50. National Survey – stage/ stories to promote an interest in books and literacy

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. Promote an interest in books and literacy	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
1	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
2	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
3	6	5	0	5	4	4	1
4	13	8	17	14	20	13	13
5 (frequently)	48	31	43	33	18	35	34
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that with the exception of P5, most teachers tend to use stories to promote an interest in books and literacy frequently (5 on the scale). Although the tendency shown at P5 is to use stories for this purpose less often than at other stages, ‘frequently’ (5) is a close second choice. This indicates that all teachers consider the promotion of an interest in books and literacy as one of the aims when using stories in their classrooms, and more than two-thirds of those who responded use stories with this aim in mind at a frequency rating of 4 or 5 on the scale.

Table 51. National Survey – stage/ stories to provide a social bond

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. Provide a social bond	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	1	1	2	1	1
1	7	0	3	7	8	2	2
2	3	9	12	9	9	6	11
3	21	13	21	12	11	25	16
4	20	10	15	19	11	11	12
5 (frequently)	18	13	9	4	4	8	7
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Table 51 shows that most teachers tend to use stories to provide a social bond within the group at a frequency rating of 3 on the scale, rising to a rating of 4 in P4-5. These results show a positive skew at all stages except for P4-5, which unlike the others, show a negative skew. However, around half of the teachers across all stages have selected ratings of either 3 or 4 on the scale, which suggests an overall all positive tendency.

Table 52. National Survey – stage/stories to promote general educational aims

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. Promote general educational aims	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
1	4	0	1	1	3	1	1
2	0	4	1	1	5	6	2
3	13	14	18	13	14	9	8
4	30	13	21	23	14	18	24
5 (frequently)	22	14	20	13	9	18	14
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Here the results show that most teachers tend to use stories to promote general educational aims at a frequency rating of 4 on the scale. This tendency rises to frequently (5 on the scale) in P2 and P6, but the overall trends for different stages seem similar.

Table 53. National Survey – stage/ stories to encourage creativity and imagination

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. To encourage creativity and imagination	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
2	0	1	1	1	3	4	5
3	10	9	14	12	11	6	3
4	22	12	19	19	21	20	18
5 (frequently)	35	22	27	20	10	22	22
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results shown in Table 53 above reveal that while most teachers tend to use stories to encourage creativity and imagination frequently, teachers in P5 tend to do so less often than at other stages.

Table 54. National Survey – stage/ stories to promote an understanding of society and culture

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. To promote an understanding of society and culture	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
1	2	1	4	2	4	4	1
2	6	9	11	14	5	4	6
3	20	18	25	17	18	17	13
4	26	10	13	15	14	14	20
5 (frequently)	15	7	8	3	3	13	9
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results above show that while most teachers tend to tell stories to promote an understanding of society and culture , they do not do so as frequently as for creativity and imagination. Differences between the

stages are not great, with most showing a positive skew. Teachers of P1and P7 reported using stories for this purpose more frequently than those of other stages.

Table 55. National Survey – stage/ stories to promote a message.

PURPOSE/AIMS: 22. To promote a message	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	2	0	1	1	2	2	1
1	5	3	4	6	10	4	6
2	11	13	16	11	9	12	7
3	29	17	26	23	15	21	18
4	16	8	9	11	7	7	13
5 (frequently)	6	4	5	0	2	7	4
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results here are closer to a normal distribution, and show that most teachers tend to tell stories to promote a message at a frequency rating of 3, which is around the middle of the scale. This is consistent across all stages.

Summary

The pattern that emerges from the data in respect of teachers' purposes or aims for the use of story in their classrooms shows that positive distributions include the use of stories for pleasure and enjoyment, to support curricular aims, to support language development, to promote an interest in books and literacy, to support general educational aims, and to encourage creativity and imagination. There is a positive skew to the results at most stages, apart from in P4-5 (see below) for the use of story to provide a social bond.

Normal distributions include the use of story to explore emotional issues, although there is a slight positive skew to these results, especially at the P1-2 and P6-7 stages. In the use of story to provide a social bond, while the results at most stages show a normal distribution, at P4-5 the results are negatively skewed, suggesting that teachers at these stages are less likely to use story for this purpose. In terms of the use of story to promote a message, the pattern is that of a normal distribution and this is similar across all stages.

Where there are differences between stages, these are evident in that almost half of all P1 teachers frequently use stories for pleasure, more than at any other stage, and teachers in P1-2 and P6-7 tend to use stories to support curricular aims slightly more often than teachers in P3-5. The use of story to provide a social bond is used less often at P4-5 than at other stages, as noted above.

In a broad sense, the results demonstrate that teachers have a variety of considered and positive aims and purposes in mind when selecting stories for use in the classroom. The use of story to support general language development and to develop creativity and imagination were identified by most teachers as aims or purposes. These were followed, in order, by pleasure and entertainment/the meeting of curricular aims, and the meeting of general educational aims. Although other reasons as noted in the tables above were also used, these six were clearly the most favoured.

Influences

Teachers were asked ‘Have your story choices been influenced by any of the following?’

Table 56. National Survey – stage/influences on story selection.

30. Have your story choices been influenced by any of the following (select all that apply):	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**	**total**
Professional recommendation (colleagues, staff tutors, etc)	63	40	54	43	37	48	42	327
Personal recommendation(family, friends, etc)	60	39	52	40	34	44	43	312
Library Service	46	31	38	26	19	31	22	213
CPD	38	25	26	23	17	21	26	176
Scholastic Book Fairs	36	22	28	25	14	18	24	167
Newspapers/magazines	24	16	25	21	20	27	24	157
Current TV programmes or cinema releases	29	12	25	20	15	24	25	150
Professional reviews (eg in TES, Scholastic publications)	23	17	24	18	12	19	20	133
Published programmes of work (eg Telling Tales, Stories for Thinking, Bounceback recommended texts)	24	12	24	17	19	19	16	131
Scottish Storytelling Centre links (courses, visits, website)	20	10	10	13	12	11	16	92
Local Theatre Projects (eg Pantomimes, book-based children's productions)	23	10	15	10	8	7	13	86
Education Scotland (formerly LTS)	14	8	8	8	5	9	6	58
BBC/C4 Learning Units (TV or audio)	13	7	2	8	9	10	8	57

The results show that most teachers note that the greatest influence on their selection of stories comes from professional, closely followed by personal, recommendation. Each of these was mentioned by around 15% (15.8% and 14.4% respectively) of respondents. Taken together, these account for almost a third of the total number of responses to this question. The patterns of influence are broadly similar across all of the stages. The influences least often mentioned, those selected by fewer than 5% of teachers, include the Scottish Storytelling Centre, local theatre projects, Education Scotland and BBC/C4 Learning Units. The other influences noted (see Table 56 above) were chosen by a range of between 6-10% of respondents.

Selection Rationales

Teachers were asked ‘How are stories selected for use in your classroom?’

Table 57. National Survey – stage/ stories selected to meet curricular aims

SELECTION RATIONALE **31.** To meet curricular aims?	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
2	3	5	1	4	4	2	4
3	15	9	14	14	11	12	10
4	23	17	25	17	19	17	24
5 (frequently)	27	14	20	15	10	21	11
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

As can be seen in Table 57 (above) the results show that the reason selected by most teachers for story selection is to meet curricular aims, and this is selected most often at a rating of 4 on the scale. This rises to 5 (frequently) in P1 and 6, suggesting that teachers at these stages select stories by this criterion more often than at other stages.

Table 58. National Survey – stage/ stories selected to meet 'another specific purpose'

SELECTION RATIONALE **32.** To meet another specific purpose (e.g. social/emotional etc)?	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
0 (never)	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
1	1	0	2	5	3	1	2
2	3	3	7	8	8	4	5
3	23	22	20	18	21	25	17
4	26	11	22	15	10	15	19
5 (frequently)	16	9	10	3	2	8	6
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results here show that most teachers select stories to meet 'another specific purpose', that is, a specific purpose other than curricular aims as noted in the previous table (Table 57, p.318), at a rating of 3 on the scale. These purposes might include, for example, social and emotional purposes identified earlier in the survey. This rises to 4 on the scale in P3 and 7, suggesting that teachers at these stages select stories by this criterion more often than at other stages.

Table 59. National Survey – stage/ stories selected on the basis of pupil interest

SELECTION RATIONALE **33.** Solely on the basis of pupil interest?	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
0 (never)	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
1	3	0	2	5	2	5	1
2	2	8	9	11	11	8	6
3	26	15	26	12	12	25	21
4	20	14	12	18	14	7	15
5 (frequently)	17	8	12	6	6	7	6
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Most teachers across all stages select stories on the basis of pupil interest at a rating of at least 3 on the scale. This rises to 4 on the scale in P4-5, suggesting that teachers at these stages select stories by this criterion more frequently than at other stages.

Table 60. National Survey – stage /stories selected on the basis of teachers' own preferences

SELECTION RATIONALE **34.** Solely on the basis of own preferences?	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
0 (never)	2	0	5	3	2	5	1
1	8	6	2	5	9	6	8
2	11	11	12	18	12	10	9
3	24	14	25	12	10	22	18
4	18	9	12	12	10	9	12
5 (frequently)	6	5	5	2	2	1	1
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that most teachers select stories on the basis of their own preferences at a frequency rating of 3 on the scale. Teachers at stages P4-5 do this less often (2 on the scale) than at other stages.

Table 61. National Survey – stage /stories selected on the basis of attractiveness of illustrations.

SELECTION RATIONALE **35. Based on attractiveness of illustrations?**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	4	0	1	9	8	13	6
1	4	4	5	10	9	13	22
2	8	7	18	15	16	14	11
3	24	17	20	11	10	12	4
4	18	10	13	6	2	1	6
5 (frequently)	11	7	4	1	0	0	0
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show a different distribution in respect of teachers' selection of stories on the basis of attractiveness of illustrations. There is an inverse relationship between the frequency of this criterion and stage,

with teachers of older pupils using this as a selection criterion less often than teachers of younger pupils.

Table 62. National Survey – stage/ stories selected on the basis of use of language

SELECTION RATIONALE 36. Based on use of language?	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	1	0	0	1	2	0	0
1	3	0	0	2	4	1	0
2	2	4	3	8	2	3	3
3	11	12	18	18	16	15	10
4	28	15	25	20	12	23	31
5 (frequently)	24	14	15	3	9	11	5
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

. The results shown above demonstrate that most teachers select stories on the basis of language use at a frequency rating of 4 on the scale, with a positive overall trend. Teachers at stages P5 select stories based on this criterion less often (3 on the scale) than at other stages. When we look at the ratings of 3, 4 and 5 together, the following pattern emerges: at P1 and P2 most teachers select frequency ratings of 4 and 5, while at P3-7 most teachers select frequency ratings of 3 and 4. This would suggest that P5 teachers are making their choices in line with those at other stages beyond P1and 2, and that it is in fact teachers of these first two stages whose selections are made according to a language – based criterion slightly more often than teachers at other stages. However, it should be noted that the differences are not great.

Summary

Over all, the patterns of response in respect of teachers' reasons for selecting stories showed a positive skew in favour of curricular aims and language use across all stages. Teachers select stories to meet 'another specific purpose' (see definition above p.319), on the basis of pupil interest, and according to their own preferences at a frequency rating of 3 on the scale. Where there were differences between the stages, these emerged as a tendency for teachers at P1 and 2 to use both language and illustrations as a selection criterion more often than at other stages, and a pattern became apparent whereby use of illustrations as a selection criterion diminished as the age of the pupils increased.

Evaluation

Teachers were asked, ‘Does it work? How do you evaluate whether or not the story has met your purposes?’

Table 63. National Survey – stage/ evaluation based on pupil engagement

EVALUATION 38. The children show engagement	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
3	1	0	2	2	4	2	6
4	15	14	17	14	23	17	16
5 (frequently)	51	30	41	36	17	34	27
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

Most teachers tend to evaluate the success of the stories they use on the basis of pupil engagement, with teachers in P5 doing so less often (4 on the scale) than at other stages.

Table 64. National Survey – stage /evaluation based on formal assessment

EVALUATION **39.** Formal assessment	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
0 (never)	3	2	1	5	1	0	2
1	12	13	5	8	7	5	5
2	21	11	18	15	11	10	6
3	18	12	20	14	12	16	18
4	10	6	11	7	10	15	11
5 (frequently)	5	1	6	3	4	7	7
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The results show that most teachers selected 3 on the rating scale in terms of the frequency of use of formal assessment of the success of stories used, with teachers in P1 and P4 using this criterion less often than those at other stages (2 on the scale).

Table 65. National Survey – stage /evaluation based on informal assessment

EVALUATION **40. Informal assessment (e.g. discussion, Q/A etc)**	**P1**	**P2**	**P3**	**P4**	**P5**	**P6**	**P7**
0 (never)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
2	3	3	1	3	2	1	0
3	4	6	8	8	9	5	7
4	30	15	26	21	20	25	15
5 (frequently)	31	21	26	20	14	21	27
Other	9	9	4	9	5	9	6
Totals	78	54	65	61	50	62	55

The use of informal assessment to evaluate the success of stories is split evenly between ratings of 4 and 5, with teachers at either end of

the primary school (P1-3, and P7) tending to use informal assessment more often than those at other stages (P3-6).

Summary

Most teachers evaluate the success of the stories they use on the basis of pupil engagement. This is followed by informal assessment (results are split between 4-5 on the scale), and then formal assessment (3). Teachers in P1 and P4 use formal assessment less often than at other stages.

Patterns by LEA

As shown in Table 30 (p.289), there is a slight variation in the frequency of story use when this is cross-tabulated by LEA, with the pattern of story use by teachers in some LEAs tending be slightly more frequent than others. Figure 20 (below) shows the geographic distribution of the LEAs with most frequent (‘every day’) use of story indicated.

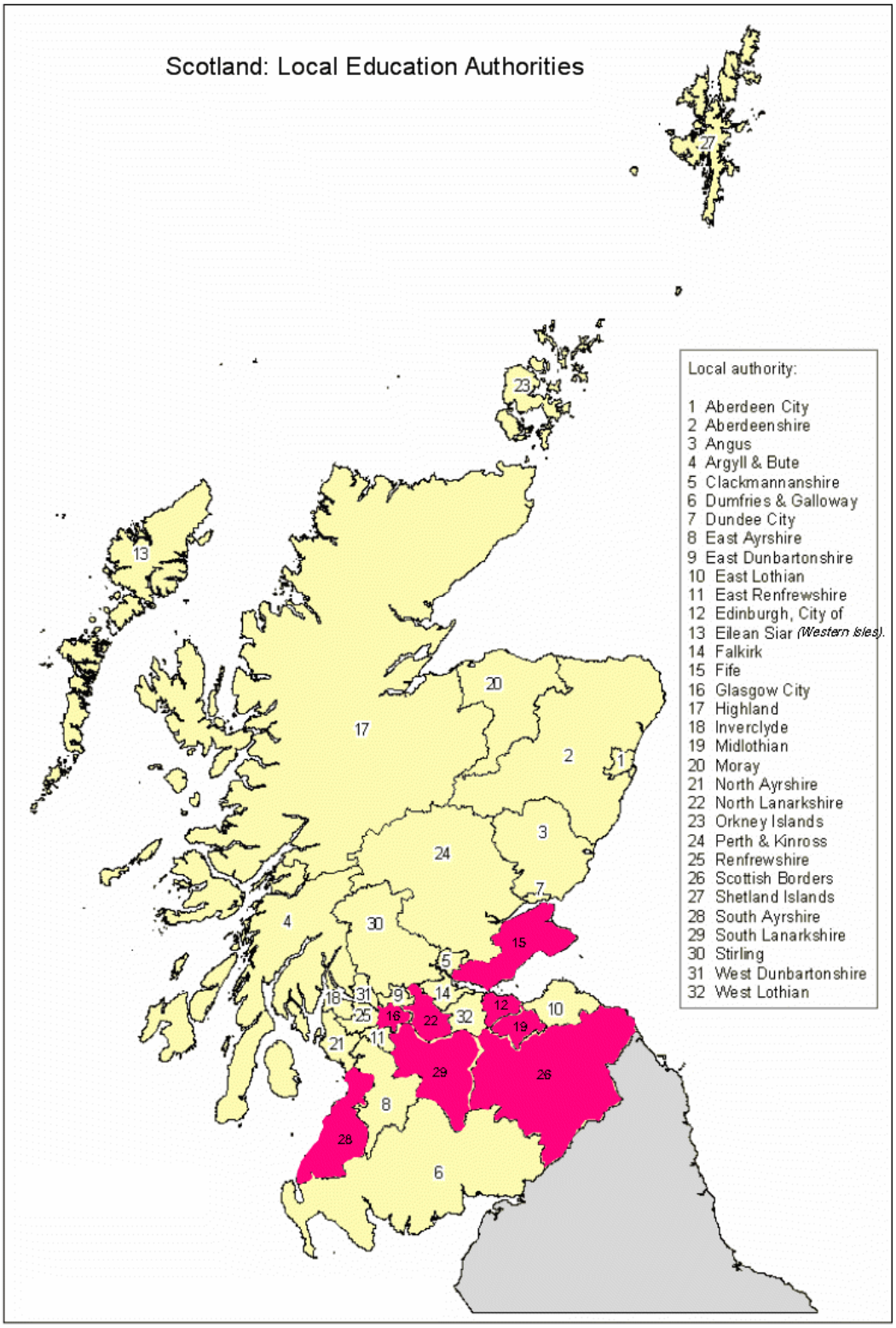


Figure 20. Scotland's LEAs (areas of highest frequency story use)

The areas coloured pink on the map show those LEAs where the data collected suggests that it is the tendency of teachers to use story every day. As the map shows, the LEAs of highest modal story use are all (with the exception of South Ayrshire (number 28 on the map) adjacent to each other. Furthermore, they are mainly concentrated in Central Scotland and the Scottish Borders.

4.5.3. Conclusions in relation to national data

Based on the data collected, teachers reported that story is being used in all LEAs throughout the country (although no information is available for Inverclyde), and of the teachers who responded, 78.4% noted that they used story at least several times a week. There did not appear to be any differences in the patterns of use when the data were cross-tabulated by gender or by years of experience of teachers. Teachers in P1 and P2 classes reported a tendency to use story more frequently than those at later stages (P3-P7). Teachers in eight LEAs – Edinburgh City, Fife, Glasgow City, Midlothian, North and South Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders – indicated that they used story more often than in the other LEAs, although the difference was small.

Other patterns were evident when the data were cross-tabulated by stage. A tendency was detected for teachers at all stages to present story orally rather than through any other medium, and these are mainly sourced from books. Teachers in P1 and P2 indicated that they are most likely to use traditional stories, and they are also more likely than teachers at other stages to source these by traditional means (for example, by word of mouth). Teachers at other stages indicated that they used other types of

fiction (for example, contemporary fiction) most often, and these stories tend to be sourced from books. The patterns for story selection are similar across all stages, with teachers reporting that they, rather than anyone else, select the stories for classroom use most often, and although pupils sometimes select the stories, it is rare for anyone else to do so.

The results show that teachers use stories in their classrooms for a variety of purposes, most usually to support general language development, literacy, and creativity and imagination. Teachers also noted that they use stories to meet curricular aims. The value of story as meeting other, wider educational goals was recognised. The main difference among the stages is that teachers in P1- P2 report use of story more often for pleasure than at other stages. This is perhaps unsurprising at the earliest stages in the school, where teachers are nurturing attitudes and dispositions towards the school environment in addition to focusing on other learning goals. It would follow then, that teachers at these stages would wish to provide the youngest pupils with pleasurable experiences in order to encourage positive attitudes towards school.

It was clear that personal and professional recommendation had the greatest influence on teachers' choices of story. While there is no way of knowing who are the persons making 'personal' recommendations, by definition those making 'professional' recommendations are also either teachers or educators. On further consideration it is evident that those making these 'personal and professional' recommendations must also have influences.

Looking at the next tranche of influences, both the Library Service and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) also have an impact on teachers' story choices, and this is closely followed by *Scholastic* Book Fairs, which are primarily promotional trade events run by the *Scholastic* publishing company and held (generally annually) in many schools across Scotland, at the request of individual schools. General purpose newspapers and magazines are noted as being as influential as the book fairs, and this is followed, in order, by television and cinema, published programmes of work, professional reviews, the *Scottish Storytelling Centre*, local theatre productions, and *Education Scotland* (the national curriculum body for Scotland) and *BBC* broadcasts.

It is surprising to note how little influence these last four organisations appear to have on the teachers who responded to the survey. Each of these organisations has a specific remit for encouraging the use of story (or in the case of BBC broadcasting, story forms), and three of these have a nationwide target audience, and yet these are the least influential of the organisations and resource-providers mentioned by teachers who took part in the survey. This must have implications for the way these organisations disseminate information.

The survey results showed that the teachers who responded had clear rationales for their story choices, and that the focus was on the meeting of curricular aims and development of language use. Teachers in the later stages of the primary school were less likely to select stories based on attractiveness of illustrations, but at the same time, illustrations

are less evident in books aimed at older groups than those used in the Early Years' classroom.

Data collected suggests that evaluation of the success of story use is mainly by observation of pupil engagement. There is no indication of how formalised this is, and this is an area which would potentially merit further investigation. It would be presumptuous to assume that evaluation by observation alone is either 'formal' or 'informal' without further investigation, as teachers do have a range of systematic observation techniques at their disposal (*inter alia* Buldu, 2010, and Chen, 2012).

Egan (1988) emphasises the need for evaluation of story-based teaching to include activities 'illustrative of the topic' while also indicating understanding of the material. In line with this thinking, the *Storyline Method* (see Section 2.6.8 p.94) utilises evidence-based assessment procedures drawn from the topic or unit of learning. This approach to assessment of learning and evaluation of teaching is promoted by *Curriculum for Excellence* which notes 'approaches used to help in assessing an individual child's or young person's progress should be consistent as far as possible with those used in learning.' (Scottish Government, 2009c). This suggests a need for the development of a strategic approach to assessment that is consistent with story-based pedagogy.

Teachers in eight LEAs – Edinburgh City, Fife, Glasgow City, Midlothian, North and South Ayrshire, North Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders – indicated that they used story slightly more often than in the other LEAs. The LEAs identified are all located in Central Scotland and the

Scottish Borders, and all (with the exception of South Ayrshire) border at least one other of this group of LEAs. These LEAs are all located in areas of high population density, and are geographically close to several centralised educational institutions and initiatives, for example, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education has bases in Edinburgh, and Glasgow; Education Scotland has national agency offices in Glasgow and Dundee; the Scottish Storytelling Centre is based in Edinburgh; Creative Scotland's head office is in Edinburgh; and the Scottish Learning Festival is based in Glasgow.

These LEAs are also within a geographical area well served by story-based projects: among many examples available are those referred to in Section 2.6.4 (p.87). The WOSDEC *Global Storylines Project* (2011) is based in Glasgow; the Scottish Opera *Big Hairy Hamish* Project (2011) took place in Perth and Kinross (although Scottish Opera itself is based in Glasgow); the Scottish Storytelling centre runs regular Continuing Professional Development sessions for teachers in Edinburgh; Newbattle Abbey College in Midlothian runs the only certificated Oral Storytelling Course in Scotland ; the *Storyteller in Schools* Project (Dawid, 2005) took place in Glasgow. These are all located in Central Scotland. That is not to say that there are no story projects elsewhere in the country (*Metasaga* (Josefsson, 2010) was first introduced to Scottish schools in Shetland), but rather refers to the fact that Central Scotland has a wealth of these.

The data collected suggest that the story-based initiatives implemented in Central Scotland are having some degree of effect in promoting story use in Local Authority schools in that geographical area.

4.6 SUMMARY

Discussions with storytellers and teachers led to the production of a list of sub-questions which allowed the inclusion of an expanded range of aspects of storytelling in the questionnaires that followed in Part 2 of the study.

Both teacher surveys and student observations reinforced each other, with student observations suggesting that the stories used by teachers in their classrooms were followed up less often than noted by teachers. However, the small numbers sampled in this second part of the study mean that this result should be treated with some caution.

Results from the small scale study which took place in the Dundee Primary School classroom offered some points for consideration – pupils were engaged by the storytelling process, but knowledge-based aims were less evidenced in the pupil responses than other types of outcome and few children demonstrated evidence of the intended learning from the stories told. However, it was noted that spontaneous metacognitive conclusions were drawn by some pupils about the process of storytelling itself, and some pupils derived unintended conclusions from the stories based on their own experiences.

In Part 4 of the study, it was evident that both pupils and teachers show an awareness of the factors that make a good story for classroom use, and there was some agreement that the two most important factors are story content, and how it is presented. The children in particular demonstrated insight into their critical awareness of the craft of storytelling.

Some aspects of story use were noted as areas for future investigation, including the issue of ‘scary’ stories, and the idea that the context in which a story is used might have an impact on story selection. A need was noted for responsiveness in story presentation that could be addressed by increased audience awareness.

Part 5, the National Survey, confirmed many of the findings from Part 2 – that teachers do use story regularly in their classrooms, that they use these for a variety of educational purposes, and that they are systematic in their selection of stories. In contrast to earlier suggestions, there were clear indications that teachers do follow up story work in their classrooms, but the results indicate that this might be less systematic than it could be, although this should be treated with some caution until further investigated. The National Survey also showed that teachers in P1 and P2 use story slightly differently from at other stages, and while this may not be surprising, the data confirms what has heretofore depended on anecdote. It is clear that teachers at these early stages use story more often simply for pleasure than at other stages, and that they base their story selections more often on illustrations and language than do teachers of older pupils. Teachers of the youngest pupils also use traditional sources for the stories they employ in the classroom than at other stages. Again, this may seem unsurprising until the complex and multi-layered nature of traditional tales is considered. Traditional tales as folk wisdom were often originally conceived for adults rather than children (*inter alia* Ransome, 1909; Collins and Cooper, 1997) – ways of passing on customs and rituals, the sharing of messages, and so on (see section 2.3 p.52). Stories of this type

might then be regarded as a valuable resource for use with older pupils, who could access the deeper and sometimes darker (Bettelheim, 1975) meanings not always easily shared with, or even appropriate for, young children.

The chapter that follows will look at conclusions to be drawn from the results of the study, and some implications informed by these.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was undertaken with the aim of examining the extent of story use in the Scottish primary classroom and teachers' purposes and beliefs about its use in support of learning. The previous chapter presented the outcomes of the data collection. These outcomes are discussed in this chapter in order to draw conclusions about story use in the primary classroom, and to suggest implications for practice, as well as to make recommendations for future investigation.

5.1 DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The study has delimitations – decisions taken in the course of the study that define its parameters – and limitations that arose as a result of the study itself. These are set out below. This section also considers relations between the study, the research questions, and the literature review. It discusses the methods used and considers some implications for policy and practice.

5.1.1 Delimitations

An early decision was taken to focus this study on story use in the Scottish primary school classroom. For the purposes of the Scottish schools system, this represents stages P1-7 (ages 5-12). The rationale

behind this decision was that experiential evidence suggests that story and storytelling is manifest in these classrooms, and it was the intention of the study, therefore, to attempt to ascertain whether or not this is an accurate perception, and if so, to examine whether or not story is being used in a considered or systematic way.

The *Curriculum for Excellence* framework for learning and teaching puts the learner at the centre, and emphasises the need to consult directly with pupils (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009) In line with this philosophy, data were drawn from the responses of both teachers *and* pupils. As a result of Piaget's (1929) work on cognitive development, which states that children before the stage of 'formal operations' at around 11 years of age (see Appendix 16, p.444) are not able to think in abstract terms, metacognitive awareness in young children is not always fully acknowledged. However, more recent writers suggest that even very young children can and do monitor their knowledge (Hacker, 1998), and that the processes involved are not age-dependent. This strengthened the decision to consult with pupils in respect of their opinions on the use of story in their classrooms.

Another consideration informing the study was the possibility that in a modern age, with an increasing emphasis on classroom technologies, target setting, progress reporting, records of achievement and an ever more crowded curriculum, there may simply be no educational justification for the use of story in schools.

Without underestimating the importance of 'scientific' knowledge: that which is based on reasoning and which Bruner (1986) describes as

'paradigmatic', it should be recognised that this is not the *only* type of knowledge, nor the only way of thinking. Genereux and McKeough (2007), *inter alia,* agree that 'narrative' understanding is one of the central conceptual structures of human thought. This study suggests that story has potential as a component in the teachers' toolkit for supporting narrative modes of cognition.

A combination of methods, both quantitative and qualitative, was used in collecting and analysing data. An initial bias towards the use of qualitative approaches was influenced (see Chapter Three, p. 102) by a sense that social research, in looking for explanations and opinions as well as facts, *should* be based on qualitative enquiry. This was tempered by suggestions from some quarters (as noted, but not endorsed, by Connolly, 2006) that qualitative methods are 'subjective and anecdotal' (*ibid.,* p.4). Reading around this subject led to the conclusion that by combining both quantitative and qualitative methods, a more considered answer to the research questions could be allowed to emerge (see Section 3.2, p.111).

5.1.2 Limitations

The storytellers with whom the initial discussions were conducted were not a cohesive group – this was the first occasion on which they had come together. I now know that there are storytelling groups around the country with whom I might have conducted discussions, and who might have provided a more free-ranging discussion as a result of their more established internal relationships.

As noted in a previous chapter, the fact that I focussed on teachers and pupils in one Local Education Authority in Parts 2 and 4 of the study

may have led to a consensus in their approaches to story use that may not be evident across the country. Were I undertaking a study of this kind in the future, I would certainly seek to focus on a wider range of opinions, by sampling groups from a series of different LEAs. The narrow focus in these parts of the study leads directly to the national data collection in Part 5.

An issue was encountered in transcribing the pupil interviews, in that it was difficult to attribute comments definitively to individual pupils, due to vocal similarities. This could have been circumvented by the use of video- rather than audio-recording techniques, and although this too would have brought with it another set of problems to be solved in respect of ethics, as well as practicalities and methodological concerns re validity, these are not insurmountable. The most obvious limitation in respect of this study relates to the ability to draw inferential conclusions from the sample data. The numbers of respondents involved in the early parts of the study are limited, and for that reason alone it would be inadvisable to suggest that conclusions drawn from the data could be extended to a larger group. To this end, a wider, national survey was conducted.

The samples in Parts 1-4 of the study were selected for both purposiveness and practicability (see section 3.2, p111 for discussion), but there is no reason to suppose these samples are atypical. The fact that the early part of the study took place in the county of Angus was also decided by both purposiveness and practicability. As most of the population of Scotland lies within Central Scotland (between Glasgow and Edinburgh), it could be argued that the population of Angus, a rural county

with no inner city schools, is not fully representative of Scotland as a whole. This is noted in Chapter Four, and no claim is being made for the generalisabilty of this part of the study. It is a *descriptive* study of how story is currently being used in Early Years' classrooms in Angus. Silverman (2005) discusses a viewpoint that suggests that *any* case can be regarded as representative since it contains at least the possibility of being so. While this may be an extreme view, Alasuutari (1995) suggests that even where generalisability may not be possible, extrapolation may be. Comparisons with the results of the National Survey suggest that the Angus data is broadly similar to the national data.

Limitations of the methods selected are discussed in the Methodologies chapter (Section 3.5, p. 120). The advantages of using convenience samples far outweighed the disadvantages, not least because it allowed the study to take place with minimal obstacles. The samples selected were purposive – it was anticipated from the outset that each sample would have some experience of working with story, and this allowed the objectives of each part of the study to be met.

A further limitation that is acknowledged in respect of the responses to the surveys used in Parts 2 and 5 of the study is that it is likely that the teachers who responded were those who were interested in (and therefore biased towards) the subject of the study.

The extent to which the researcher's own knowledge and preconceptions may have influenced the study also has to be considered, as has the relationship of the researcher to the study. There is some recognition that the researcher himself is in fact an instrument of the study,

and that his experience should therefore be acknowledged (*inter alia* Maxwell, 2004, Glesne and Peshkin, 1992) (see above, page 20). Carr and Kemmis (1986) draw attention to the wide range of knowledge the teacher-researcher brings to classroom research, and lists some of the kinds of knowledge as:

- commonsense knowledge
- folk-wisdom
- skill-knowledge
- contextual knowledge
- professional knowledge
- theoretical knowledge
- social/moral/philosophical knowledge

The first two, 'commonsense knowledge' and 'folk-wisdom' might be considered everyday opinion, although in the case of the latter, this refers to opinions held within the profession. One example cited by Carr and Kemmis (*ibid.* p.42) is the widely held – by teachers – notion that pupils get restless on windy days. Skill-knowledge refers to the particular set of skills used to organise and manage pupils and resources productively, for example, how to phrase requests in such a way as to increase the likelihood of them being complied with. This is one of the types of knowledge that was brought to the study. In terms of 'contextual knowledge', Carr and Kemmis (*ibid.)* are referring to specific knowledge about the particular pupils/class/school. In respect of this, a limited contextual knowledge was brought to the study in that I was familiar to some extent with the two LEAs concerned in the earlier parts of the study

(Angus and Dundee), having worked in each of these some years previously, although not in any of the schools used in the study. I had also visited some of the schools in my current capacity of university tutor, and although I did not know any of the staff or pupils in these schools, they were familiar with my identity. This acquaintance, limited as it was, did undoubtedly facilitate the transactions involved in the business of securing consents and setting up interviews. Professional knowledge refers to the body of knowledge concerned with pedagogy. I would propose that the professional knowledge I bring to the study enhances the development of appropriate frameworks for questioning, and as such, enhances the validity of the investigation, as well as the interrogation and interpretation of data collected. Theoretical knowledge about the role of education and educational practices informs the study throughout, and in fact underpins the basic premise of the study, that story is educative; that it is a resource for teaching and learning. The last kind of knowledge cited by Carr and Kemmis (*ibid.*) is social/ moral/ philosophical knowledge. They refer to this kind of knowledge as being about how people interact, the uses of knowledge in society, or about truth and justice. This kind of knowledge informs the study at every level. This is a study relating to people. It asks how they use certain kinds of knowledge (how teachers use their knowledge about story, for example, to support the school curriculum). In order to begin to ask this kind of question, there exists in the mind of the researcher the capacity to frame the question in the first instance.

The knowledge brought to the study by the researcher, however, should not go unchallenged. As Carr and Kemmis note,

> *Some of our 'knowledge' will crumble as soon as we begin to think about it seriously as a guide to action; some will be modified, deepened and improved through analysis and active testing.* (*ibid.,* page 44).

It is necessary to question the knowledge and assumptions held by the researcher and the study responds to the initial premise that story is widely used in the primary school classroom, that it is efficacious as a medium for teaching and learning, but that story selection may not always be systematic (see page 14) by asking *how* widely story is used, *how* teachers establish the efficacy of the stories they use, and *how* systematic story selection is. These questions form the basis of the questionnaires and surveys in both the Angus and the National studies (see Appendices 4 and 17)

So, to respond to Kanpol's question, 'Where was I? Or was I?' (Kanpol, 1998) it should be acknowledged that this study is subject to the intrusion of personal and professional agendas – it would not have taken place without these. Indeed, Kanpol maintains that 'No research is innocent or devoid of a political agenda, whether overt or covert!' (1998, p.191). This need not be problematic if the researcher rises to the challenge of self-reflection. Through self-reflection, not only can knowledge of the structural elements of the study itself be attained, but at the same time an understanding of where the researcher himself fits in to the structure can be achieved.

5.2. CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THE STUDY

The section that follows responds to the research questions: What is the extent of story use in the Scottish primary school classroom, and what are teachers' purposes and beliefs about the use of story in support of learning?

1. What is story – how do teachers define 'story'?
2. How do teachers use stories in their classrooms?
3. What makes a 'good' story for classroom use?
4. How purposively do teachers plan for story use in response to learning goals?

5.2.1 What is story?

There is a great deal of literature that attempts to answer this question, and none of it is definitive – that is to say, different writers respond to it in different ways. Polkinghorne (1988) uses the term interchangeably with 'narrative', while at the same time noting that the term 'story' carries connotations of fictional events. Moon (2010) recognises the ephemeral nature of the term, and includes in her definition different means of discourse including sound, drama, dance, music, and mime. She acknowledges the inconsistent use of the term 'story', while attempting to establish some basic parameters.

Mandler (1984) is clearer in her identification of two forms of story – the story grammar, and the story schema. Story grammar is, she maintains, the elements that make up 'a story' – that which I have defined as 'hard' story. Story schema, according to Mandler (ibid.), is a mental structure – what we understand a story to be. I have used the term 'soft'

story to describe this structure. Along with Mandler, other writers have attempted to define the structure of story, inter alia Temple and Gillet (1989). I have offered a new and simplified story map that synthesises elements offered by these writers (Table 7, p.37).

The storytellers interviewed in Part 1 of the study, and the teachers in Part 4 both proposed that a story should have a basic structure – that of beginning, middle and end. This structure is reflected in the definitions offered by the literature. Both the storytellers and the teachers confirmed that their understanding of story was not confined to the written word, but included means of discourse similar to those noted by Moon (2010). Pupils were not asked for a definition of the term ‘story’, but the responses during the interviews in Part 4 of the study included references to a variety of media, including many of those noted in the literature and by the other respondents.

So, what is story? There is no single, clear definition, with different writers using the term according to their own needs and interpretations, including fictional, historical and personal narratives. However, many agree that stories have a particular structure. The form stories take can be ‘deep’ or ‘broad’ and they can be ‘soft’ or ‘hard’ as discussed in Section 2.2.4 (p.40). What is clear is that in the view of the teachers and storytellers who took part in the study, and for their purposes, stories are structured with a beginning, middle and end, as shown on the story map in Table 7 (p.37) The same participants also proposed that stories need not be restricted to the written word but can be represented by a variety of media.

5.2.2 How do teachers use stories in their classrooms?

Results from both the Angus and the National Surveys of teachers showed that they use story regularly, in a variety of ways, for a variety of purposes, and that they do this for pleasure and to promote development of language and literacy, as well as in support of other curricular aims. Results from student observations of teachers' practice support this finding, and the teachers interviewed in Part 4: the Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews confirm this. The results from the National Survey confirmed the finding from the Angus Survey that particularly in the Early Years' classes, pleasure was one of the main rationales for story selection. All of the teachers interviewed were enthusiastic about the use of story in the classroom, and the pleasure and focus they showed in discussing the stories they used was evident.

The responses to the National Survey indicate that teachers mainly use observation of pupil engagement to evaluate the success of the stories they use. Of the teachers who were interviewed during the Angus Teacher Interviews, a minority did say that they felt that stories should not always be followed up, and that this is especially the case where stories are used simply for pleasure. Although this appears to be a minor detail, it is a significant one when analogous use of story is considered. As discussed in 2.5.2 (p.72), young children have to be able to make the necessary relational shift between the base element of an analogy and the intended learning goal in order to understand the analogy and derive intended learning from it (Bjorklund, 2005). As young children are not always able to do this for themselves (Goswami, 1992), the teacher must

select a base for the analogy that is relevant and recognisable to the learners, and must also act as an intermediary between the base of the analogy and the desired analogue. This suggests that teacher support is crucial when using story as a learning device, and cannot be left to chance.

5.2.3 What makes a 'good' story for classroom use?

The results of the interviews in Chapter Four, Part 4: Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews show that both pupils and teachers have much in common in respect of identifying what they want from a story. They show that the most important factors in defining a good story are content or subject matter, followed by presentation. The many references by the children to what happened in the stories they discussed show an engagement with the story form and teachers recognise this. This endorses the use of story as a form that promotes a narrative mode of cognitive processing (Bruner, 1986), which in turn forms one of the central conceptual structures of human thought (Genereux and McKeough, 2007) (see section 2.4.2, p.66). Both pupils and teachers ascribed some importance to the way stories are presented. A degree of perception on the part of the pupils interviewed was shown, with some attention to the fine detail of presentation. This, along with the degree of metacognitive awareness shown by some of the pupils who responded to the survey in Part 4 (Dundee Primary School Sessions) leads to the conclusion that pupils are well able to contribute to educational debate. They are informed 'consumers' of story, consultation with whom can potentially inform educational practice. It is not so surprising that teachers know and

can articulate what makes a good story. Pupils, this study indicates, also know, and can also articulate.

The consistency of the pupil responses merits some discussion, given the very different school catchment areas. Schools with different types of school population (in terms of socio-economic background) were intentionally selected, in order to provide a range of different data that could be compared on an inter-school basis. The fact that the data were remarkably consistent leads to some questions: is this a reflection of the interests of the guardians who returned permission slips, that is, is the sample more biased than had been originally accounted for? Secondly, does teacher intervention account for the evening out of the pupils' responses (has the school's approach to working with story compensated for inherent differences)? Is it likely that, given that all four of the schools were located within the same Local Education Authority, they all had a similar approach to the use of story in the classroom? Each of these possibilities raises points for further investigation.

5.2.4 How purposively do teachers plan for story use in response to learning goals?

The planning cycle for classroom learning and teaching consists of four aspects – monitoring, evaluation , planning, and assessment (*inter alia* Briggs and Sommefeldt, 2002), and can be illustrated thus:

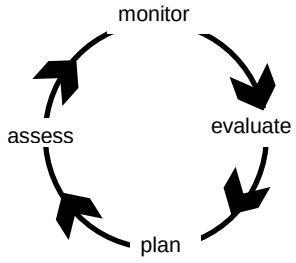


Figure 21. Planning cycle for learning and teaching

(based on Briggs and Sommefeldt, 2002)

While the cycle can be entered at any point, the illustration above shows monitoring at the top in order to respect constructivist convention where the prior learning of the pupil is accounted for (see p.69).

This systematic planning cycle is acknowledged by teachers in their responses to the National Survey. In relation to monitoring, this would refer to the teachers' monitoring of pupils' prior learning/knowledge. The results of the data collected show that most teachers who responded take account of pupils' interests (which relates to prior knowledge) in their selection rationale (see p. 290), and that in many instances pupils themselves select the stories used in the classroom (see p. 284).

In relation to evaluation, the results of the National Survey show that most teachers do evaluate the success of their story use, and the tendency reported is for this to be based on observation of engagement and informal means of assessment (see p.292). As already noted on p.83, Harrett (2009) points out that written forms of assessment can be detrimental to story- based outcomes, and a small percentage of the teachers who responded (9% in the Angus study, and 5.9% in the national study) said they never used formal assessment to measure story-based

outcomes. Furthermore, of the teachers interviewed in Part 1, the storyteller/teacher interviews, although some of the teachers said they 'sometimes' assessed formally, there were those who noted that they would not always assess for learning or even understanding. The results of the Dundee Primary school story sessions showed that very few pupils demonstrated evidence of the intended learning from the stories told to them during the course of the study (see Table 14, p.157). Although this was a very small -scale study, it does suggest that teachers cannot afford to be complacent in respect of assessing for story-based outcomes, and that assessment must be part of the planning cycle for learning and teaching.

In relation to planning, the results from the National Survey show that teachers select stories in response to learning goals (see p. 290). Teachers who responded indicated that they frequently use stories for general educational purposes: to support language development, to promote an interest in books and literacy, and to encourage creativity and imagination. The first two of these goals respond to the requirement of *Curriculum for Excellence's* requirement that literacy across learning is the responsibility of all teachers, regardless of stage or subject (Scottish Government, 2009c). The third goal, that of encouraging creativity and imagination, is also emphasised by *Curriculum for Excellence* as being 'important on a national and global level for economic growth and development.' *Curriculum for Excellence* further states that 'creativity improves the self-esteem, motivation and achievement of learners' (although this proposition is thus far unsupported by research). The

results of the National Survey further show that the teachers who responded indicated that they used story to support curricular goals at a frequency level only slightly lower than that indicated for those broader goals indicated above. Although all teachers in Part 2 of the study (the Angus Survey) noted that they used story purely for pleasure and entertainment, this was not the case in results from the National Survey.

5.3 APPLICATION OF LEARNING THEORY AND ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF STUDY

With reference to the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study outlined in section 1.3 (p.15), three theoretical bases were identified (see Figure 1,p.15).

These three theoretical bases are identified as narratology, cognitivism, and pedagogy. The aspects of these that relate directly to learning are narrative understanding, constructivism, metaphorical and analogical processing. Pedagogical approaches also link to learning indirectly through constructivism. The use of story as a vehicle for learning relates to each of these in the following ways:

Story and narrative understanding

As discussed in section 2.4 (see p.63), stories are processed in a particular way, described by Bruner (1996) as ‘narrative’ cognitive processing. As previously discussed, story knowledge is concerned with understanding a sequence of events in a holistic manner, by relating individual components to each other in order to arrive at an understanding that may reveal a significance greater than that of the sum of the parts.

Lyle (2000) concluded that narrative understanding, as the primary mode of understanding, should provide the starting point for planning for classroom learning. This would position story, as one of the main vehicles for narrative understanding, at the centre of classroom practice.

Story and constructivism

Constructivist theory (see p. 69) maintains that the individual understands his world by making links between new and prior knowledge and emphasises that learning outcomes are constructed in the light of experience. Story is constructivist in different ways. Through metaphorical and analogical processing (see below), learners construct their own individual understanding of story. By participating in immersive story approaches such as *Storyline* (where the learners actively co-construct the story by engaging with the plot as characters within it), learning is allowed to take place based on the stage of understanding learners are at.

Story and metaphorical and analogical processing

Section 2.5 (p.70) notes the presence of metaphor and analogy in story, reports that research has shown that even young children use metaphor (Goswami, 1992), and discusses the power of metaphor and analogy to engage learners. As a creative and expressive use of language, metaphor as present in story, meets the requirements of *Curriculum for Excellence* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009).

Story and pedagogical approaches

Andrew, Hull and Donahue (2009) identified four instructional methods related to storytelling : case-based instruction, narrative-based instruction, scenario-based instruction, and problem-based instruction (see

p.86) and there are many examples of educational programmes and approaches to story use that illustrate these, some of which are discussed in section 2.6.4 (p. 87).

Original contribution of this work to the field of study

In terms of the early discussion of narrative theory, several models of story grammar are presented (see Tables 3-6, pp.34-36). This study presents a newly simplified model which synthesizes the main elements of these (Table 7, p37).

Two new models have been proposed to illustrate the concept of narrative structure (Section 2.2.5, p. 42-47) which synthesise and simplify earlier models produced by other writers.

Evidence suggests that primary school teachers use story as a pedagogical device in their classrooms. This is supported by much research documenting the diverse ways in which teachers do this (*inter alia* Shirley, 2005; Dawid, 2005; Pollock and Chun, 2008). However, although there is a huge amount of published work which examines the detail of particular case studies (the aforementioned studies are only three of a number of such works), the emphasis is very much on pockets of practice and there is little documentation confirming the place of story as an established and widely accepted pedagogical tool. There is a sense that it has been taken for granted that use of story in the classroom is indeed a widespread teaching approach. This study contributes to the field by establishing how far this is in fact the case within the context of the Scottish classroom.

Patterns of usage are discussed in respect of geographical spread, and story use across the stages of the primary classroom is compared in order to establish whether as an approach to teaching and learning it is more frequently embedded in the practice of teachers at any given stage, and whether the ways in which story is used might differ between stages.

This study focuses on *how* teachers use story: enquiry is made into systematic approaches to story as a tool for learning and teaching in order to clarify its professional use.

It has been established as result of this study that assessment approaches to story-based learning outcomes are variable, with an emphasis on observational assessment over other, more rigorous forms. It is suggested that approaches to assessment be investigated which are commensurate with a story-based pedagogy.

While teachers' and other practitioners' views and expertise are often broadcast (*inter alia* Collins and Cooper, 1997; Stotter, 2002), children themselves are rarely consulted – and yet, as this study shows, they have well-formed and articulate views on the matter which can and should be used to enhance the professional practice of teachers. As a result of the study an enhanced appreciation is therefore anticipated of the ways in which pupils, as well as teachers, understand the aims and purposes of story in the classroom; and the sharing of knowledge pupils have about good practice in terms of story presentation.

It has been noted (p.316) that some of the organisations with a specific remit for the promotion of story-based pedagogy are currently among the least influential in respect of teachers' choices of story for

classroom use. This would suggest either that these organisations should be examining their dissemination procedures and outreach programmes, or that LEAs should be promoting teachers' awareness of these.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS

This section addresses both implications to be drawn from the study in respect of the methods used, and also implications to be drawn from the results of the study for policy and practice in the use of story in the classroom. There is a further set of implications to be drawn from this study that were quite unanticipated, in terms of who is involved in the knowledge generation that impacts upon policy and practice. In reflecting upon the way the study was carried out, the efficacy of the methods used in collecting data in each of the five parts is considered.

5.4.1 Pedagogical perspectives: Story and *Curriculum for Excellence*

Curriculum for Excellence is the document title of Scotland's national curriculum guidelines. This curriculum was introduced across Scotland in 2010 after a roll-out period of some five years. *Curriculum for Excellence* aims to provide a coherent and integrated curriculum for all children aged 3 to 18 (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2011). The curriculum is founded on seven 'principles':

- *Challenge and Enjoyment*
- *Breadth*
- *Progression*

- *Depth*
- *Personalisation and choice*
- *Coherence*
- *Relevance*

Curriculum for Excellence was developed in response to calls from educators for an integrated approach to learning, and therefore teaching methods which promote the integration of knowledge and subject matter sit very well with this new curriculum. Story meets many of the demands of *Curriculum for Excellence*, and relates to several of the principles mentioned above.

Challenge and enjoyment

While all stories are not chosen for the degree of challenge they offer, the principle of enjoyment is one which story meets, as teachers who use story in the classroom show awareness of the level of engagement promoted by enjoyment of a story.

Breadth

The principle of Breadth, within the context of *Curriculum for Excellence*, refers to breadth of subject matter. This principle requires that pupils' learning is not narrowly confined within one or two subject areas, but that pupils have opportunities for a wide variety of learning experiences. There is no doubt that story can provide for breadth of this kind – stories address all kinds of subjects, and all kinds of experiences.

Depth

Depth of learning, as required by *Curriculum for Excellence*, refers to the potential to transfer learning from one learning experience to another,

in order to enrich understanding. This is a principle well served by story, which allows pupils to make connections between experiences and to develop and extend prior knowledge and understanding.

Personalisation and choice

Teachers who use stories in their classrooms do so with reference to the needs and interests of their pupils, thus meeting the principle of personalisation and choice.

Coherence

In respect of *Curriculum for Excellence*, the principle of coherence refers to cross-curricular learning (by way of its unifying capacity). So, not only are pupils learning in a variety of subject areas (breadth), they are also encouraged to see the links between these. Children understand stories by employing a narrative mode of cognition (Bruner, 1996). This way of thinking, as discussed in Chapter Two, is concerned with understanding how a sequence of events can be organised into a whole 'story'. Storytelling is a perfect way to develop narrative understanding, which in turn informs coherent (that is, unified) learning. *Curriculum for Excellence* promotes coherence in learning. As a learning tool, stories exhibit and promote coherence.

Relevance

This principle refers to the meaningfulness of a unit of learning to the lives of the pupils. It is suggested by *Curriculum for Excellence* that deeper learning derives from experiences that are meaningful and relevant to the leaner. While it is true that not all stories are relevant to all learners, it is clear from the teacher feedback in Chapter Four that where stories are

used in the classroom, every effort is made to ensure that they relate to the stage of development of the pupils, thus ensuring relevance.

So, story meets six of the seven principles on which *Curriculum for Excellence* (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009) is based. Story supports a narrative mode of information processing (Bruner, 1986), which encourages integration of knowledge. Where teachers had begun to disaggregate the curriculum into its separate components under previous governmental guidelines, the 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines (Scottish Government, 2010b), they are now looking for ways to provide a more coherent platform for learning and teaching. Lyle (2000) notes the predisposition of children to think in narrative forms based on everyday contexts, and urges teachers to take advantage of teaching approaches that encourage this. The data collected in this study suggests that in using story as a context for learning, teachers are doing this.

The principle of Progression, which is the only one absent from the list above, is founded on the idea that learning should be developed at increasing levels of challenge. While it may be that teachers do elect to ensure that this is also the case when using story in the classroom, this is not an area on which the data from the study reported, and is therefore one which might be explored on a future occasion.

5.4.2 Knowledge generation - unanticipated outcomes

One outcome of the data analysis that was unanticipated was the extent to which pupils' knowledge about the use of story in the classroom reflected that of teachers. This suggests a degree of metacognitive awareness on the part of pupils. The young pupils who responded to Part

4: Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews were able to be explicit about what makes a good story (for their purposes), and what makes a good storyteller.

It should be acknowledged that pupils' requirements of story are not the same as teachers', and focus on engagement and entertainment rather than on educationally-defined rationales. However, in order to use story for educational purposes teachers have first to engage the learners and this is where pupil voice can help to inform teachers' choices.

Some of the older pupils in Part 3: Dundee Primary School Story Sessions showed an awareness of how story acts as a metaphor, and they were able to identify the analogous learning to be derived from story, with pupils noting that they had learned *'to believe in yourself'"* and *'you don't have to get everything bigger and better because you are just the same'* (see Section 4.3.1, p.233). Further, there was some evidence of unintended learning taking place as a result of pupils constructing meaning based on their own previous experience (Bruner, 1966). An example of this is offered in Section 4.3.1 (p.241), and refers to a girl who derived an understanding of the story based on an incident that had happened between her and her father. This is not to suggest that pupil voice should replace that of the teacher, but rather that it can enhance and extend this. Research on consultation with pupils on learning and teaching (General Teaching Council for England, 2005) suggests that this can provide valuable feedback to teachers which can help to enhance their practice or highlight what they already know to be good practice, thus allowing them to gain insights that can inform their own professional

development. Advice from Education Scotland (formerly Learning and Teaching Scotland) on *Curriculum for Excellence* says:

> *The framework for learning and teaching puts the learner firmly at the centre, actively involved in every aspect of their own learning. It is important, therefore to consult and involve pupils ...*
>
> (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2009).

5.4.2 Wider implications

All of this offers implications for the wide variety of stakeholders involved in the use of story for educational purposes – practising teachers, local educational authorities (who define local policy), governmental institutions (who define national policy), student teachers (and by association, Initial Teacher Education providers), writers of stories intended for the education market, publishers of educational materials, and all those 'others' who use story as an educational medium – librarians, broadcasters, storytellers, health and social work professionals, parents, and of course, children themselves.

5.4.3. Implications for classroom practice

The disaggregation of the primary curriculum in Scotland that occurred between 1991 and 2010 while the 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines (Scottish Government, 2010b) were in place led to a curriculum that was regarded by many teachers as overcrowded, too prescriptive and lacking in flexibility. With no emphasis on story within the guidelines, and little flexibility over how these guidelines were implemented, use of story in the classroom rested on the inclination of the individual teacher.

With emphases on (as noted above) challenge and enjoyment, coherence, and personalisation and choice, *Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Government, 2009c) provides a framework within which the use of story is well situated. Not only has it been well established by writers on the subject that stories are enjoyable (*inter alia* Kearney, 2002), it has also been noted in this study (see Chapter Four: Parts 3 and 4) that children who were asked reported this to be the case. The use of story provides a degree of coherence within the curriculum by the very nature of the processes involved in narrative modes of cognitive processing (Bruner, 1986).

Given the conclusions drawn from the study about the degree of awareness exhibited by pupils of their own learning, and their clearly articulated views on what makes a good story from their perspective, teachers would be well advised to take account of pupil voice when selecting story material for use in the classroom, further subscribing to the principle of personalisation and choice, while at the same time keeping to the child-centred perspective implicit in the new curriculum.

The key implication for teachers is that story clearly meets the needs of *Curriculum for Excellence* in Scotland, and the needs of pupils everywhere, and is therefore well deserving of a place in the teachers' toolkit. A further implication for teachers derives from the earlier discussion in Section 2.5 (p.70) on supporting metaphor and analogy within the story form. If teachers are to use analogous stories to teach towards cognitive (or cognitive-affective) goals, the teacher must select a base for the analogy that is relevant and recognisable to the learners, and

she must mediate between the base of the analogy (the story) and the desired analogue (the learning goal) in order for the learner to achieve the intended learning (Goswami, 1992). The results from the Angus Teacher Interviews (Appendix 13, p.433) show that the teachers interviewed did not mention this.

Other implications for teachers are evident in the responses made by pupils during the Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews. The data collected points to evidence that pupils are looking for particular attributes in the stories they hear – for example, they do like stories to be age-appropriate, they often noted that they liked 'funny' stories, and that they did not like 'scary' stories. These factors, along with pupil recommendations in respect of the presentation of stories (use of visual support, fluency, expression, audience interaction) can confirm and enhance storytelling practices in schools. In order to maximise the potential of story as a teaching strategy, the teacher has a role in selecting appropriate material; in supporting analogical reasoning to assist pupils to derive meaning from stories; and taking account of pupils' views and recommendations in the selection and presentation of stories.

A further important implication for classroom practice derives from the discussion in section 4.5.3 (p.331) that calls for the development of a strategic approach to assessment that is consistent with story-based pedagogy in line with the requirements of *Curriculum for Excellence* guidelines (Scottish Government, 2009c). As noted in section 5.2.4 (p.348) approaches to assessment of story-based outcomes can be variable, but unless outcomes are assessed, teachers cannot evaluate the success of

their teaching, and this in turn impacts on their ability to plan for future learning.

As noted in an earlier section, (Section 1.3, p.19) engagement is necessary in order to assure learning, and teachers do endorse this notion insofar that the data show that informal assessment of pupil engagement is used to measure the success of stories used in the classroom. Information gathered in this way can inform planning for teaching and learning, and there is therefore some value in approaching this in a more formalised way. Measuring tools such as that developed by Kishida, Kemp and Carter (2008) The *Revised Individual Child Engagement Record,* support a formalised approach to observational assessment of child engagement. This particular instrument consists of three components: direct observation using a time sampling system, which is then coded according to the type of engagement evidenced, anecdotal records, and rating scales. Although this is only one systematised approach to the observational assessment of engagement, professional development in respect of the investigation, development and application of this, and similar, approaches to observational assessment would support teachers in formalising their strategies.

5.4.4. Implications for local authorities and national governmental institutions.

The results of this study, based on the Angus Teacher Surveys, the Angus Teacher Interviews and the National Survey indicate that teachers use story as an approach to learning and teaching, and it is up to Local

Education Authorities to ensure that the school curriculum does not peripheralise this useful strategy.

Local Education Authorities in Scotland determine local educational policy (in line with National Guidelines), and they are among the many providers of continuing professional development for teachers. As such they are well positioned to liaise between the teachers and other professionals who can support and enhance current practice in the use of story in schools. Schools' library services, professional writers and storytellers, theatres and broadcast media providers – these and many others can be brought into schools to work with both pupils and teachers to extend and enhance current practices. This, however, takes not only financial support, but also willingness on the part of schools and the Local Education Authority to reach out into the wider storytelling community, and to acknowledge and learn from the expertise of those outside the teaching profession.

National Governmental Institutions such as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and Education Scotland also play a part in supporting the use of story in the classroom. *Curriculum for Excellence* in Scotland has already done this by providing a curriculum framework within which context-based learning is encouraged. Education Scotland (formerly Learning and Teaching Scotland), the principal curriculum body for Scotland, provides centralised resources for story that are easily accessed online. The key implication for institutions in supporting the use of story in the classroom is that they must provide a clear endorsement of the approach, a means for supporting the continuing professional

development of teachers in the use of this approach, and access to resources that will enable effective engagement with it. These implications, however, must be underpinned by a paradigm shift at a strategic level in educational thinking – one that recognises and supports the significance of narrative modes of cognition.

5.4.5. Implications for student teachers and Initial Teacher Education providers

Implications for teacher education are informed by the earlier discussion on narrative understanding and meaning-making (section 2.4, p.63). An understanding of narrative cognitive processing must permeate teacher education courses at all levels, and in all subject areas. Courses must be designed to support, enhance and extend the use of story forms in the classroom at both a theoretical and a practical level. This requires a holistic approach to the design of the initial teacher education curriculum that takes cognisance of the naturally-occurring precedence of narrative understanding over paradigmatic forms (Bruner, 1986).

5.4.6. Implications for writers and publishers

Writers and publishers of material for children are necessarily serving two audiences – the adults who buy and present the material, as well as the children at whom the material is targeted. It is therefore essential that the needs of both are met. The results of the study do not show these to be contradictory: many of the attributes defined by pupils as contributing to a ‘good’ story are the same as those noted by teachers.

There is awareness within educational publishing of the engaging and motivational force of the story format – the existence of a widening

variety of educational programmes based on stories is testament to this, and the programmes discussed in section 2.6.4 (p.87) are only a small selection. As well as those mentioned, stories are being employed, for example, to provide a context for teaching in science (Naylor and Keogh, 2010), in maths (Way and Hickton, 2010), in teaching for emotional well-being and resiliency (Perth and Kinross Council, 2009), and in humanism (Budd, 2008). These few examples demonstrate that the story form can be used as a teaching strategy across the curriculum, and need not be restricted to traditional, literacy-based subject areas.

5.4.7. Implications for others

There is some interest outside the teaching profession in the use of stories for educational purposes, and this may extend to (among others) those involved in broadcast media and computer-based learning; librarians; drama workers; social, psychology, and medical workers; religious groups; nursery and play-workers; as well as parents and carers.

All of those involved in using story can take advice from the recommendations of both the teachers and the pupils who responded in the Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews in respect of presenting stories. Their practice can also be informed by the advice offered above in respect of selecting material and supporting analogical reasoning derived from the story.

5.5 SUMMARY

Delimitations of the study, such as the focus on Early Years' (P1-3) practice in Part 4 of the study , the decision to consult both teachers and

pupils, and the use of mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methods in the investigation, were all discussed.

Limitations to the study included the representativeness of the sample on whose responses the study focussed. It was noted that the study does not purport to be definitive but that it provides a description of the way story is being used in Scottish classrooms at the current time.

Conclusions drawn from the data suggest that story is employed systematically and for a variety of purposes in the classroom. Both teachers and pupils have much in common in their understanding of what makes a good story, and pupils are particularly well able to define the attributes which contribute to effective delivery of story.

This chapter concludes with a series of implications for the various groups who have a stake in the promotion of story use, and suggests that teaching towards narrative understanding should be a focal issue for local authorities and national governmental institutions as well as initial teacher educators in order to empower teachers in fully exploiting this valuable learning strategy.

The next chapter will reflect on some of the issues which arose during the course of the study, and will outline some new developments which have derived from the findings.

CHAPTER SIX: REFLECTIONS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Chapter Two defined story according to the following story map –

Table 7. Story map

1	**Setting + initiating event →**
2	**Event →outcome (x *n)* →**
3	**Conclusion →**
4	**(Reaction)**

Key:
→ means 'leads to'
n means any number
( ) means optional

Were this study to be described in story terms, it would correspond to the above map in the following way:
Chapter One: Aims, Rationale, Context; Chapter Two: Literature Review **(Setting)**; Chapter Three: Methodologies of the Study **(Initiating Event)**; Chapter Four: The Empirical Work **(Events and Outcomes)**; Chapter Five: Conclusions **(Conclusion).** If this correspondence is accepted, the final chapter could be regarded as the **Reaction.** The reaction to a story contains any moral or learning which can be derived from it, and might also include afterthoughts. This chapter, then, is the 'Reaction', and sets out some of the ways in which the findings from the study have already begun to inform my own practice. These provide a starting point for further work on developing the use of story in, and for the classroom.

6.1 ISSUES ARISING

Some issues arose during the course of the study which merit further discussion. This section reflects on these issues in the order in which they occurred.

Moon (2004) notes that

> *Reflection is applied to relatively complicated, ill-structured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge and understanding that we already possess.*
>
> (p.82)

There were several ideas which emerged during the study which merited some deliberation in order to fully understand them, and also to learn from them:

- The distinction between storytelling and story reading.
- The issue of ‘scary’ stories.
- The notion that a ‘good story is a good story’.
- Research ethics – a dichotomy.

In order to address each of these issues, the framework below (Figure 22) was used to support reflection. This was done in order to facilitate the purposeful examination of the troubling ideas, and to support considered resolutions (Moon, 2004).

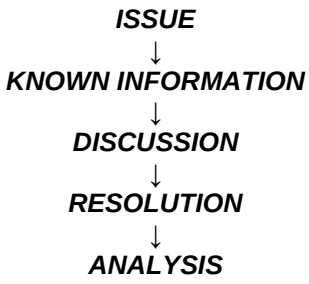


Figure 22. Framework for Reflection

6.1.1 Storytelling and Story Reading

Issue

Chapter One noted that for the purposes of this study, the term 'storytelling' has been used to describe a wide variety of activities which embrace different ways of sharing story. This includes the traditionally accepted definition, which is the oral relating of stories from memory or imagination, but is not confined to this definition.

Known Information

In some instances, the term 'narrative' is used interchangeably with 'story' (for example, in Polkinghorne, 1988). Livo and Rietz (1986, p.7) maintain that storytelling is the 'practice of oral literature'. Pellowski (1977, p.14) believes that the adoption of storytelling by educators has led to what she refers to as 'institutionalised storytelling', and is seen as an introduction to books and literature. Pellowski maintains that this is an unacceptable definition to folklorists, who she says learn their stories orally. Moon's (2010, p.13) 'parameters of story' include vocal telling, drama and dance, acting, out, the written word, mime, touch, music, graphic representation,

and even dreams. This very wide definition is closest to the one adopted by this study.

Discussion

In collecting data from both children and teachers, it was noted that their definitions of storytelling were fluid and did not rely solely on a traditional definition whereby stories are told from memory, unsupported by text.

Resolution

Because this was the framework within which the respondents discussed story, this was accepted as a working definition for the purposes of this study.

Analysis

In order to arrive at a full understanding of the subject under study, it is useful to examine the perceptions of all those involved in order to come to clear definitions that do not rely solely on accepted or traditional terminology.

6.1.2 'Scary' stories

Issue

The children interviewed in Part Four of the study said on repeated occasions that they did not like 'scary' stories. Two of the teachers asked mentioned that they would not use scary stories, and two noted the need to be aware of the emotional needs of the children in order to avoid selecting stories with potentially upsetting content. This merits some further discussion, based on two separate issues, the first relating to ethics, and the second to the role of fantasy in children's cognitive processing.

Known Information

As noted in the discussion in Chapter One on the issue of obtaining consent, Article 12 of *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* declares that children have the right 'to express a view on all matters of concern to them, and to have that view taken seriously' (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1996-2007). This same article would seem to be relevant in relation to children's statements about 'scary' stories, and discussions with teachers suggest that they do take the stated preferences of children seriously. However, a separate issue, and one which leads to a something of a dichotomy, is the role fantasy plays in supporting the processing of negative emotions such as anger and fear. Bettelheim (1975) is quite insistent that stories (and his discussion refers to fairy stories in particular) provide a forum which allows children to explore negative emotions in a 'safe' way. Bettelheim refers to Freud in his assertion that 'thought is an exploration of possibilities which avoids all the dangers inherent in actual experimentation' (Bettelheim, 1975, p.119), and suggests that vicarious exposure to negative scenarios allows children to process their responses without having to live the experiences. Bettelheim (*ibid.*) believes that :

> *the total personality, in order to be able to deal with the tasks of living, needs to be backed up by a rich fantasy combined with a firm consciousness and a clear grasp of reality*
>
> (p.118)

Discussion

The words ‘combined with a firm consciousness’ have particular resonance if fantasy scenarios are to be explored in the classroom. An important message which may be derived from this is that someone has to be responsible for ensuring that stories are based in a ‘firm consciousness’, and in the classroom, that responsibility falls to the teacher.

Resolution

If stories which allow children to confront negative emotions are appropriately mediated, they need not be ‘scary’, and the dichotomy no longer exists. Chapter Two discusses metaphor and analogy in story, and emphasises the role of the teacher in supporting children’s understanding of the messages encoded in stories. The teacher has a further role in mediating story, and this relates to the establishment of contexts in which stories can be understood and explored by selecting story scenarios appropriate to the age and stage of children’s development, and by delivering stories in a context which encourages discussion, allowing children to make sense of encoded messages in light of their own real-life experiences.

Analysis

Where apparent dichotomies exist, these can be resolved by the implementation of scaffolding techniques.

6.1.3 ‘A Good Story is a Good Story’

Issue

One of the teachers interviewed in Part 4 of the study, responded when asked if the criteria for defining a story as ‘good’ ever varied – *‘*A good story is a good story*.’* This circuitous response seemed at first to imply that definitions for ‘what makes a good story’ – one of the central questions in this study – never vary. Bearing in mind that in the context of the study, story is being examined for its fitness as a classroom resource, some reflection on this statement in the light of the findings of the study seems appropriate.

Known Information

It was clear from the responses of other teachers interviewed that the notion of a ‘good’ story depended on the context in which it was used (see section 4.4.1, p.245), and yet this teacher, along with one other who stated ‘Some stories are classics that transcend boundaries …’ seemed to be stating the opposite. If a story (for classroom purposes) is defined as ‘good’ by measuring it against the criteria established by the results of the study (I have used only criteria agreed by both teachers and pupils):

- Content
- Presentation
- Visual support
- Characters
- Style
- Age appropriateness

then all (classroom) stories are ‘good’, because, with the exception of ‘visual support’, all stories used in the classroom meet the above criteria. To what extent, and in what way, stories can be measured against the above criteria, is subjective. Taking the first criterion as an example, it is evident that all stories have content. Referring to the story map on p.37 (Table 7), a story, as defined for the purposes of this study, consists of a setting, event(s) and a conclusion (with the option of a reaction or afterword): this is the content.

Discussion

All content is not necessarily ‘good’: someone has to define something as ‘good’, as the term is not absolute, but is a value judgement. This argument extends throughout the list of criteria – while these attributes have been defined by pupils and teachers as being important in the definition of a good story, a story can meet all of these criteria and still not be a ‘good’ story if the individual components are not also judged as being ‘good’. Therefore, a good story has to be good in respect of all of its components. However, as the term ‘good’ is a subjective one, it follows that ‘a good story is a good story’ may mean just that: it is any story which is judged to be a good story. This argument is reminiscent of the one used by Lewis Carroll in Through The Looking Glass and What Alice Found There (2001, p.82), ‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less.’

Resolution

From the initial interpretation of 'a good story is a good story' as meaning that the definition *never* varies, I eventually concluded that the definition *always* varies, and is dependent on the judgement of whoever offers the definition. The answer to the research question 'What makes a good story?' must be 'it depends on what you want it for, and what you do with it.'

Analysis

'Unpacking' of clichéd or ill-considered statements can reveal previously obscured messages.

6.1.4 Research ethics

Issue

The teacher interviews conducted in Part 4 were digitally recorded, and the transcriptions of the interviews were sent to the teachers for their approval. In all cases but one, these were approved without question. One teacher, however, asked that an alteration be made to one of her statements. This led to a dilemma. The transcription had been completely accurate – the recording was examined again in the light of her request to confirm this. However, while I wished the transcription to be wholly accurate, I also wanted to represent the teacher's intentions accurately, and this led me to some consideration of where my responsibilities as a researcher lay. Should allegiance lie with the study, or with the respondents?

Known Information

Silverman notes (2005, p. 257) '…new and unexpected dilemmas are likely to arise during the course of your research' and he points to the need therefore for the researcher to clarify his intentions while articulating the problem.

Discussion

As a researcher, I had to be certain that I was reporting my findings as honestly and as accurately as possible. Because of this I was reluctant to make an alteration to the transcript which I knew to be false (insofar that I knew the respondent did say exactly the words as transcribed). I also had a contract with the respondent, however, which allowed her to withdraw from the study at any point. Had I declined to alter the transcript, I ran the risk that she would withdraw altogether, and her contribution would be lost. Further, my contract with the respondent implied an agreement that her intentions would not be misrepresented (although this was never made explicit, and it is doubtful that any respondent would agree to be interviewed at all if such an agreement were not expected). Duty to the study suggested that the transcript should not be altered, but duty to the respondent suggested that it should.

Resolution

In clarifying the intentions of the study, it was determined that the statement in question had no real bearing on the final outcome of the study, and that it could therefore be 'adjusted'. The statement was omitted altogether rather than altered, as that seemed to be a more honest route. In the case of this study, this was not a significant problem, but it was one

which drew attention to a potential issue of which I had been previously unaware.

Analysis

Research ethics is a complex and multi-layered subject, and there can be no simple 'one size fits all' solution. Each ethical dilemma must be considered on an individual basis.

6.2 FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS ARISING FROM THE STUDY

The findings from the study have informed some further developments within the Initial Teacher Education programmes at the University of Dundee, and further afield.

6.2.1 Developments within Initial Teacher Education programmes.

As a result of the study, units of work have been developed to enhance the use of story by primary education students at the University of Dundee in two ways – by introducing the *Storyline* Approach to learning and teaching as described in Chapter Two, and also by working with student teachers on storytelling skills.

Within the context of the Initial teacher Education programmes at the University of Dundee there are several modules which refer to the development of thinking skills. As a result of this study, a comparison between paradigmatic and narrative modes of thinking has now been included in the module.

Students on both post- and undergraduate courses have been introduced to the use of *Metasaga* (Josefsson, 2010) to enhance their

teaching in language, social subjects, philosophy, and personal and social development.

6.2.2 BBC Project

In the summer of 2009 the feedback about 'what makes a good story' from Part 4 of the study (the Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews), was used to inform a series of scripts for BBC Scotland's Learning Unit. The table below shows how the stories produced were matched to the attributes defined by teachers and pupils.

Table 66. Match between scripts and story attributes.

Attribute	SCRIPT 1	SCRIPT 2	SCRIPT 3
Content (subject matter or plot)	✓	✓	✓
Presentation	✓	✓	✓
Visual support (pictures and so on)			
Characters	✓	✓	✓
Medium	✓	✓	✓
Technical details (author/synopses/and so on)	✓	✓	✓
Style (use of language/genre)		✓	✓
Gender appropriateness	✓	✓	✓
Home-school links	✓		
Length	✓	✓	✓
Age appropriateness	✓	✓	✓

6.2.3 5th International Storyline Conference

Two papers were presented at the 5th International Storyline Conference in Reykjavik, Iceland discussing findings deriving from this project (McGarry, 2012 (a) and (b)), focussing on the use of Storyline as a tool in Initial Teacher Education, and on children's metacognitive awareness of story attributes.

6.3 SUMMARY

The term ‘storytelling’ as used in the study was discussed, and an explanation was offered based on the use of ‘storytelling’ as the word used to describe a variety of different ways of sharing story. This definition was adopted as it was the way the term was used by respondents during the study.

A question had arisen in Chapter Four with reference to the use of ‘scary’ stories, and this chapter discusses the need to respect children’s opinions with regard to their often stated preference that these should be avoided. This argument was considered alongside Bettelheim’s (1975) proposition that children can learn to process negative emotions through story. It was suggested that teacher mediation is necessary if stories are to be used for this purpose, and that this mediation should take into account the careful establishment of contexts for story appropriate to the needs of the learners.

One of the issues discussed in this chapter was that of definition of a ‘good’ story, and the conclusion drawn was that any definition is subjective and depends on a whole range of variables.

A problem arose during the course of the study when one respondent requested an alteration to the record of a statement made during interview. This prompted some reflection on the responsibilities of the researcher to ethical considerations, to the study, and to the respondents. Although the issue in the case of this study was a very minor one, this incident brought to my attention the potential for clashes of interests which can occur. The decision to remove the offending

statement from the interview transcript was informed by the advice of Silverman (2005) who recommends the researcher reflect carefully on both the intentions of the study and on the exact nature of the problem in order to come to a decision which responds to both. Removing the statement had no effect on the result of the study and that was therefore the best solution in this instance.

Results drawn from the study have already begun to inform some further developments, including units of work on the uses and practice of storytelling and the *Storyline* approach in both the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) (P.G.D.E.(P)) courses at the University of Dundee. A proposal has been made for the inclusion of an introduction to Bruner's (1996) narrative mode of cognition as part of student teachers' investigation into the development of children's thinking skills. Data collected have also informed the writing of a series of scripts for BBC Learning.

Section 5.4.1 (p.356) discusses how the use of story in the classroom sits with the aims and principles of *Curriculum for Excellence* in Scotland, and concludes that the demands of this curriculum are well served by approaches to learning which incorporate story.

It has been established that story is well used in Scottish schools. It is being widely used for a variety of purposes and enjoyed by both teachers and pupils, and its use is well supported by current curriculum developments in Scotland. The reports on the use of story in a higher education context demonstrate methods for learning through, as well as learning about story.

CHAPTER SEVEN: POST-SCRIPT

This project began as a result of my own experiences as a teller of stories – both in the classroom in support of my teaching, and as a writer of stories as a resource for others. It reflects the conviction that stories have a great power – the power to illustrate ideas and experiences; to engage and to support thinking; to reach untouched parts of the mind, and to bond us as social beings. The journey was begun in some apprehension that personal beliefs about the strength of stories as a learning device were outmoded, or peripheral to an increasingly goal-oriented, outcome-focussed school curriculum. This apprehension was ill-founded. Stories are as relevant in our schools today as they have ever been, as this study shows.

The literature review demonstrates early reading around the subject of story, and clarified at an early stage the difference between the abstract and the concrete forms of story. It also informed thinking in respect of the subtle distinction between story and narrative, two terms which are frequently used interchangeably. The study notes that while story is narrative, it is a very particular kind of narrative, with its own definitive structure. Narrative, however, is not always story.

Reading on narrative processing led to an appreciation that the way we understand narrative informs much of meaning-making, and that,

as Bruner (1986) notes, narrative cognitive processing is a primary mode of understanding, often preceding the forms that we think of as formal (scientific or mathematical forms).

In discussing metaphor and analogy, it became evident that in order to use story successfully to achieve learning goals, the teacher must take on the role of mediator, so that the listeners (the pupils) will be enabled to understand, and fully benefit from analogical story formats, particularly if she is using story to meet a particular learning intention. If the analogy is not mediated, the teacher runs the risk that her learning goal will be distorted. That is not to say, however, that an alternative understanding constructed by a listener in the light of his own experience is 'wrong' – simply that the teacher must be mindful to support the intended analogy if she wishes to meet *her own* goals.

The methodologies of the research process required that questions of validity, reliability and generalisability were addressed. While I believe I responded easily to the first two, the third, the question of generalisability, provided something of a challenge. None of the five parts of my empirical work was based on a representative sample, and could not therefore be said to be generalisable in a statistical sense. And yet this study was about more than mere statistics. It attempts to look in a holistic way at a way of thinking, at a way of transmitting ideas. Robson's alternative strategy for generalisability, that of 'making a case' (Robson, 2002) answers this dilemma. Although the groups studied in the course of this project are not representative in a statistical sense, they are not unusual, and similar groups may be found in schools across Scotland.

I am satisfied that the data collection methods used, while not without their limitations, are appropriate for this project. In terms of practicability, the methods used ensured that the project could be completed within the time constraints of both the study itself and the school year, in a way that was acceptable to the sample groups, and provided manageable data. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods used provided data which gives an accurate picture of current practice in Angus schools.

The empirical work, which took place in five parts, developed in an inductive way over the course of the study. Part 1, the Storyteller/Teacher interviews, was designed to establish a framework of ideas round the notion of story use which would then be used in the next part of the study. In that sense, in Part 1 was a way of establishing a baseline understanding of how story was being used for educational purposes both in and outside the classroom.

Part 2, the Angus Teacher Surveys/Student Observations provided some statistical data on teachers' use of stories in the classroom, and many of the statements were informed by ideas and vocabulary drawn from Part 1. Students' observations of story use provided a degree of triangulation in support of the data collected.

An opportunity presented itself which seemed to be ideal for the purposes of my study, and this subsequently informed Part 3 of the empirical work. I was approached by a school to tell stories to pupils, and took this as an opening to collect data on pupils' understanding of stories. I had information about story use from storytellers, from teachers, from

student teachers – this was an ideal opportunity to further enhance my understanding. This part of the study investigated how stories are received, compared with the previous data, which had focussed on how stories are transmitted.

Part 4 consisted of interviews with teachers and pupils, and the data thus collected amplified and illuminated much of that which had gone before in terms of data collection. The narrative methods used in collecting the data in this part of the study allowed the participants a voice to tell their own stories.

The final part of the study, Part 5, extended the data gathered from Angus teachers in Part 2 by means of a national survey, and provided information gathered from a wider, and therefore more generalisable, field.

Before discussing outcomes, it should be acknowledged that there were issues that came up during the course of the study, and these were reflected on in Chapter Six, along with implications for all stakeholders.

What were the 'outcomes'? Teachers' definition of 'Story' was clarified as a particular kind of narrative and two forms identified: the 'soft' (story-idea) and 'hard'(story-form). At the same time, a revised story-map was created that synthesised and simplified those developed by other writers (*inter alia* Mandler, 1984).

The empirical work confirmed that teachers in Angus use story systematically (for defined purposes, and in a considered way) and often. This refuted any initial concern that story was falling out of favour as a teaching resource.

The empirical work also collected a great deal of information about what teachers and pupils consider to be the attributes of a ‘good’ story – and the similarities of these opinions were noted. Both groups were in agreement that not only content, but presentation of stories contribute to their success. What was also notable was the degree to which pupils were able to make comment on both content and presentation of stories. Pupils’ critiques of the nuances of storytelling proved to be as detailed as those of teachers.

This study has taken more than five years to complete. In that time, the primary school curriculum in Scotland has changed. Schools in Scotland in 2007, when the study began, were very different places than they are now. At that time the school curriculum was very stratified, with clear subject divisions, and little emphasis on cross-curricular approaches. This was the environment which provoked initial concerns about the ways in which story was being used (or not used) in the classroom. This has now changed. Scotland’s curriculum, *Curriculum for Excellence*, actively encourages creative and inter-disciplinary approaches to teaching and learning. The Scottish Storytelling Centre moved into a purpose-built space in 2006, and from there has run an increasingly diverse programme of events and Continuing Professional Development opportunities for teachers that support and promote the use of story in the classroom. Other organisations and educational support providers in Scotland also promote story as an educational tool, for example, Scottish Youth Theatre, GLOW, Education Scotland, Scottish Youth Dance, TAG (Theatre Around Glasgow) Theatre Company, MIE

(Moving Image Education), among many others. The degree to which these organisations have thus far been able to influence classroom practices has been noted as an area for development.

In terms of a justification for the inclusion of story-based teaching in the primary school classroom, this study concludes with the words of a pupil from Dundee Primary School quoted in Chapter Four. When asked if he had learned anything from the story he had just heard, he said:

'Story teaches you things.'

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 Deductive and inductive approaches to research.

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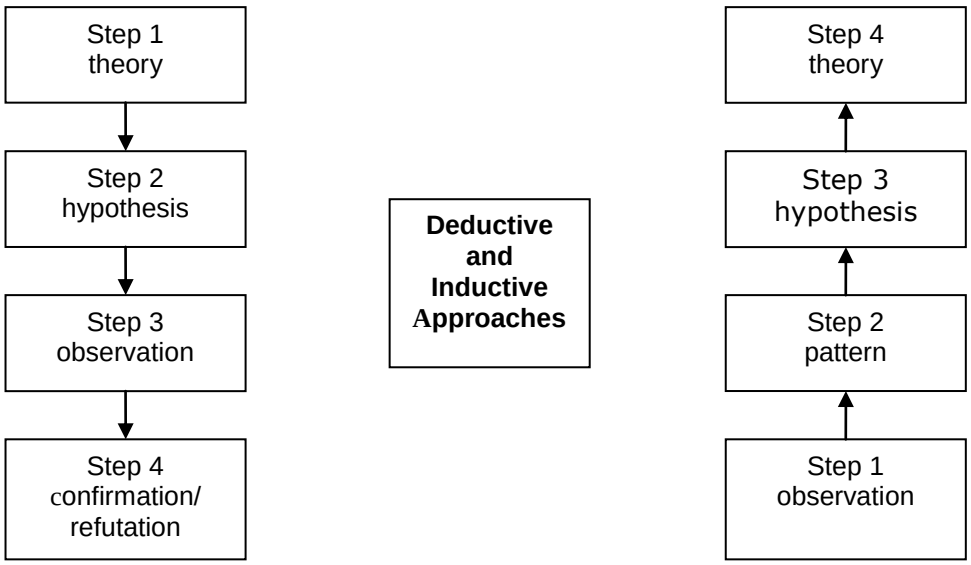
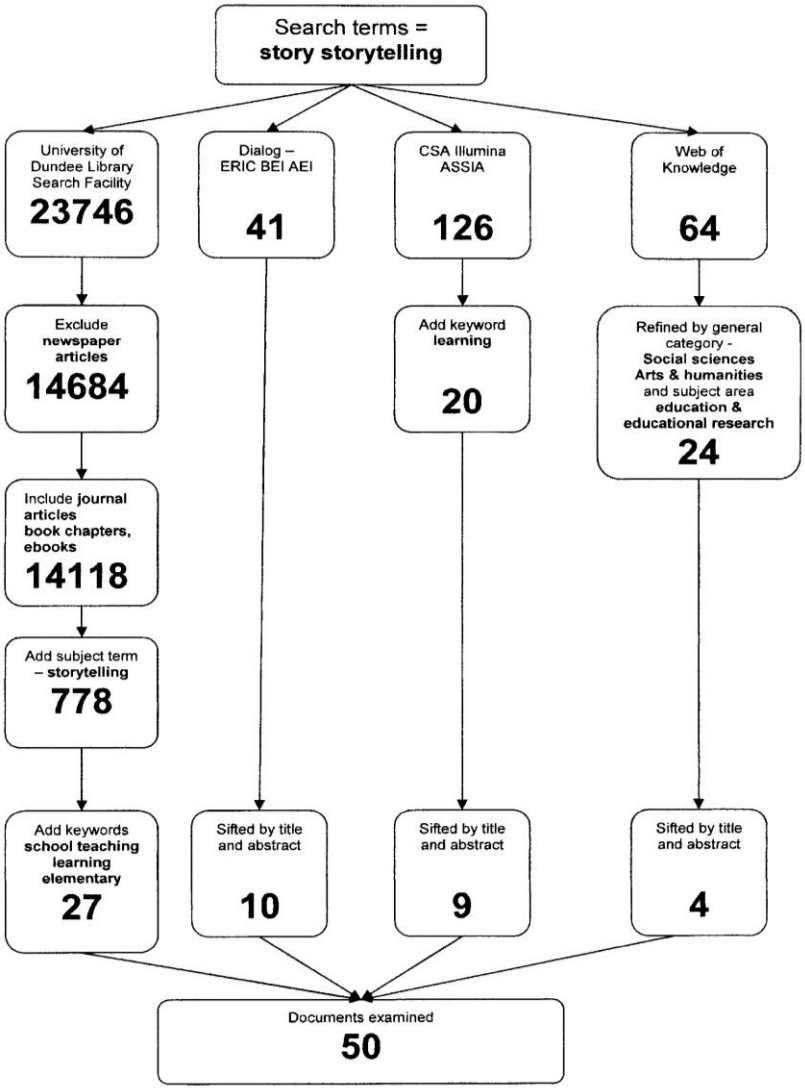


Deductive approach (top down) **Inductive approach (bottom up)**

APPENDIX 2 Literature Review – Search Process



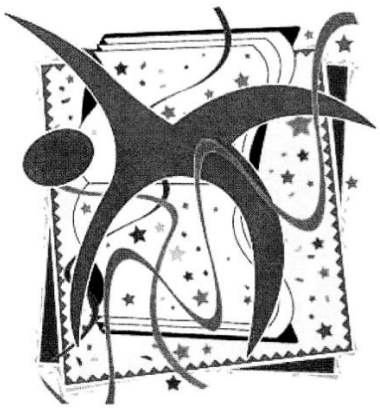
APPENDIX 3 Results of Interviews with Storytellers and Teachers (collated)

STORYTELLERS	PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS
CONTEXTS: Pre-school volunteers Nursery teacher Primary teacher Library services Literacy and communications worker Bible Alive workers International Development Worker (Energy and Water) Play Therapist	CONTEXTS: P1-3 class teachers
WHY DO YOU USE STORY? Entertainment Exploring emotions Understanding culture and society Showing and exploring differing viewpoints Individuals can take different things from a story according to their needs Non-threatening way of delivering a message Calming Integrative Very personal A way of passing on advice	WHY DO YOU USE STORY? Sometimes just for enjoyment … to develop language skills ... sometimes its not related to anything at all. Just because I think it's important there are books that lend themselves to topic work. Sometimes if you've got an emotional issue in the class you can find a story you can use in a kind of PSD way .. in a nurturing way, to develop a social bonding in the class. As escape. To develop the love of reading. As a behavioural tool for managing the class. Formal curriculum based reasons. Informal, social and emotional support and development classroom management. Sometimes its to spur imagination... Whether you're going to do it in a formal context or ...
WHAT IS A STORY? An account of something A narrative A form. It is going somewhere – it has structure. Has a beginning and an end. Beginning, middle and end. The beginning may not come first in the story sequence. Stories always have an end, even although they may not be supplied. A story has connections – a narrative . Can be totally visual. Can be told through actions. Dance. Senses. Communication which makes sense.	WHAT IS A STORY? Anything anybody tells, that you tell to the children or the children tell to you. Anything that is written down, real or imaginary. It could be watched, like a film. It could be a picture – it could be a picture format. You tend to think of story initially as being oral, or a book, in words, some stories don't have words – picture stories don't have words. Stories you get for infants don't have words. It is an organising of ideas, someone organising their thoughts and

	ideas.
WHAT KINDS OF STORIES DO YOU USE? Fiction. Historical tales. Myths, legends. Traditional stories and fairy stories. Personal stories – stories from my own life.	WHAT KINDS OF STORIES DO YOU USE ? Past experience stories, made up stories, stories from books, whether you read them or just tell them. We had a DVD the other day – the Horrible Histories – that was a story. We do a lot of traditional tales and pictures, and we do things like encouraging them to tell stories, like with puppets and roleplay
HOW DO YOU SELECT STORIES According to a required programme. Something the teller relates to. Based on connections to experience of audience .	HOW DO YOU SELECT STORIES According to the purpose you are intending to use them for there are books that lend themselves to topic work. Sometimes just for enjoyment. Sometimes its what you like, or a child likes. Or illustrations. Books that children in previous years have enjoyed. And children bring in stories, and they say can you read my book – To develop language skills ...
HOW DO YOU TELL IF IT HAS WORKED? Positive response from audience – eg Smiles, attention, positive feedback, passing the stories on to others, requests for repeat tellings,	HOW DO YOU TELL IF IT HAS WORKED? Depends on purpose .. Engagement Sometimes you do make assumptions that they've enjoyed it. They might not have. They might have just sat and behaved they might not have liked it, or even listened very well – because I certainly wouldn't check for learning or even understanding every time I read a story. If it was to calm them, and they're calmer, then your story has served its purpose. Watching reactions. Specific formal assessment. A follow-up task would show if they had met your targets ...

APPENDIX 4 Angus Teacher Survey

Tell Me a Story



A Survey by Fiona McGarry

UNIVERSITY OF

DUNDEE

THE CONTENTS OF THIS FORM ARE ABSOLUTELY CONFIDENTIAL. INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE RESPONDENT WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Once upon a time ...

there was a teacher called Fiona who liked stories (that's me).

One day ...

Fiona decided to ask some other teachers (that's you) if they felt the same way.

And so ...

she produced this survey. I hope you will find the time to fill it in.

Now read on ...

USE OF STORY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM:
SURVEY OF ANGUS SCHOOLS

1. IS STORY USED IN YOUR CLASSROOM? (tick)	**often**	**rarely**	**never**
• yes			
• no			
IF YES, please complete the following questionnaire. ***IF NO***, please return the questionnaire anyway, as this information will also help to inform the results of the survey.			
2. THINKING ABOUT *HOW* STORIES ARE USED IN YOUR CLASSROOM, ARE THESE (tick all that apply)			
ORAL: spoken word stories			
• Recounted from memory by teacher			
• Recounted from memory by pupil(s)			
• Read by teacher			
• Read by pupil(s)			
• Made up by teacher			
• Made up by pupil(s)			
AURAL: sound stories			
• Music played by teacher (instruments OR recordings)			
• Music played by pupil(s) (as above)			
• Sound-effect stories made by teacher (no words)			
• Sound-effect stories made by pupil(s)			
VISUAL: pictures only, no words			
• Pictures made by teacher			
• Pictures made by pupil(s)			
• Pictures from book			
• Pictures taken from other source e.g. photo/ poster/magazine/ etc			

ELECTRONIC MEDIA	**often**	**rarely**	**never**
• Audio – CD/tape/radio etc			
• Video – TV/Film/DVD etc			
• Computer technology			
DRAMA			
• Performed for pupils by others			
• Performed by pupils for themselves (includes improvised drama/roleplay)			
DANCE			
• Performed for pupils by others			
• Performed by pupils for themselves			
PUPPETS			
• Performed for pupils by others			
• Performed by pupils for themselves			
• OTHER (please state .....)			
3. THINKING ABOUT *THE SOURCES* OF THESE STORIES, ARE THESE (tick all that apply)			
Stories presented by teacher:			
• From own experiences			
• From traditional source (myths, fairytales, etc)			
• From remembered source			
• Read from words in a book			
• From pictures only book			
• From other visual source (poster/painting/photograph etc)			
• From own imagination			
• From music or sounds			
Stories presented by pupil(s):			
• From own experiences			
• From traditional source			
• From remembered source			
• Read from words in a book			
• From pictures only book			

	often	rarely	never
• From other visual source e.g. poster/painting/photograph			
• From imagination			
• From music or sounds			
• OTHER (please state…..)			
4. THINKING ABOUT WHY YOU USE STORY IN YOUR CLASSROOM, ARE THESE (tick all that apply)			
• purely for pleasure/enjoyment/entertainment			
• to help explore emotional issues			
• to support curricular aims			
• to support general language development			
• to promote interest in books and literature			
• to provide a social bond within the group			
• to promote general educational aims e.g. encourage thinking skills			
• as a behaviour management mechanism			
• as a respite from class work			
• to encourage creativity and imagination			
• to promote an understanding of society and culture			
• to promote a social/political/religious/philosophical message			
• OTHER (please state...)			
5. THINKING ABOUT THE *GENRES* OF STORY USED, ARE THESE (tick all that apply)			
• traditional tales			
• fiction			
• non fiction			
• historical stories			
• OTHER (please state…)			

6. THINKING ABOUT *WHO SELECTS* STORIES FOR CLASSROOM USE, ARE THESE CHOSEN (tick all that apply)			
	often	**rarely**	**never**
• by the Class Teacher			
• by a member of the Management Team			
• by another member of staff (other Class Teacher/Classroom Assistant/Early Years' Officer etc)			
• by a parent			
• by pupils			
• OTHER (please state)			
7. THINKING ABOUT *HOW* STORIES ARE *SELECTED* FOR CLASSROOM USE, ARE THESE CHOSEN (tick all that apply)			
• to meet curricular aims			
• to meet another, specific purpose (e.g. social/emotional etc)			
• according to interests of pupils			
• according to own preferences			
• based on past experience of pupil interest			
• based on attractiveness of illustrations			
• based on use of language			
• OTHER (please state)			
8. THINKING ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT IT WORKS! HOW DO YOU JUDGE IF THE STORY HAS MET ITS PURPOSE? (tick all that apply)			
• children show engagement, i.e. they are paying attention			
• children offer positive response (comments, smiles, joining in etc)			
• children ask for story to be repeated			
• children retell story to others			
• formal assessment (e.g. worksheet, comprehension exercise etc)			
• informal assessment (e.g. discussion, Q/A session)			
• OTHER (please state …)			

9. YOUR DETAILS (Please tick)				
• Teaching experience (in years)		NQT	1-3	3+
• Class taught	P1	P2	P3	Composite
(OPTIONAL) If you would like the chance to receive the Walker's Books Pack, please give the name of your school. The winning school will be notified by **3/04/09**				

APPENDIX 5 Dundee Primary School Sessions

How pupils referred to stories indexed by Subject, Title and Characters

Q1. Which story/stories did you hear?	**Code S=subject T=title C=characters**
Silkies	**S**
The one about the old woman and the lady	**C**
The one about the flag	**S**
The silkies	**S**
The silkies	**S**
The one about the witch	**C**
The silkies	**S**
The one about the witch	**C**
Silkies	**S**
About a witch	**C**
About a witch	**C**
Flag	**S**
Silkies	**S**
About a witch	**C**
Silkies	**S**
The silkies	**S**
The story with the seals	**S**
The one with the flag	**S**
The silkey	**C**
The witch	**C**
The Scottish flag	**S**
The silkies	**S**
About a witch	**C**
Silkies	**S**
One about a witch	**C**
One about a flag	**S**

The love story	**S**
The love story	**S**
The one about the girl who went to the enchanted forest	**C**
Love story	**S**
Flag	**S**
How we got the Scottish flag	**S**
The enchanted forest one – Tamlin	**T**
Love story	**S**
Scotland flag	**S**
Scotland	**S**
Woods	**S**
Magic box	**S**
The enchanted forest story	**S**
Scotland	**S**
About the flag	**S**
Tam Lynn	**T**
Flag	**S**
True love	**S**
Flag	**S**
True love	**S**
Love story	**S**
St Andrew Story	**C**
The love story	**S**
The one about true love	**S**
Flag	**S**
The flag one	**S**
The love heart box one	**S**
The king story	**C**
King	**C**

Flag	**S**
Story of flag	**S**
About a king	**C**
About a king	**C**
King	**C**
King	**C**
About a king	**C**
A king	**C**
The king	**C**
King	**C**
About a king	**C**
A king story	**C**
The king story	**C**
The king story	**C**
The king	**C**
A story about a king	**C**
About a king	**C**
	Total: **S=41** **T=2** **C= 28**
Q.3 What were they about?	**Code** **S=subject** **T=title** **C=characters**
Seals	S
Half woman half seal	C
A girl that goes on the beach	C
A witch	C
About a witch and she made a pig come to life	C
a woman had to learn her name	C
a man who liked a girl	C

a sailor that stole a silky skin	C
about guessing old lady names	S
the one with seals were ?	S
the one with the flag was with the army	S
the silky was about a half woman half fish	C
the one about the silkies was about a man	C
A girl who lost her seal skin	C
A witch wanted a lady's baby	C
St Andrew didn't want to be put on the same cross as Jesus	C
Silkies come out at night time	S
There was a boy and girl in love	C
Scotland flag	S
A girl and a boy in love	C
How a young girl went to an enchanted forest and fell in love	C
Two people in love	C
St Andrew	C
Girl	C
True love	S
Scotland	S
Our flag	S
True love	S
The Scotland flag	S
True Love	S
The Scotland flag	S
True love with a fairy	S
A magical forest	S
How we got our flag	S
The enchanted forest	S
True love	S

A flag	S
The one about the flag and how we got it	S
The king and the 3 princes	C
A king and his 3 sons	C
About a king and a frog	C
About a frog	C
About 3 princes and a puddock	C
About a king with 3 children	C
A king and his 3 sons	C
A king and his 3 sons	C
It was about a puddock	C
A king a puddock and his 3 sons	C
The king and a frog	C
A king and his 3 sons	C
About a king and a puddock and the kings sons	C
Princes, king, a frog	C
About 3 brothers	C
A king blowing a hair out of the window for one of his sons to become king	C
It was about a king with his 3 sons	C
It was about a puddock	C
A king and a puddock and a prince	C
	Total: **S=20** **T=0** **C=37**

APPENDIX 6 Student Observation Schedule and Notes

USE OF STORY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM – OBSERVATION SCHEDULE (NOTES)

USE OF STORY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM – OBSERVATION SCHEDULE
SCHOOL ……CLASS ..... DATE .....
NAME (optional)……..

	WK 1			WK 2			WK 3			WK 4			WK 5 *		
	O	R	N	O	R	N	O	R	N	O	R	N	O	R	N
1. Story read by teacher															
2. Story read by pupils															
3. Story used by teacher (other media)															
4. Story used by pupils (other media)															
5. Chn show engagement															
6. Chn offer positive response															
7. No follow-up															
8. Session followed up informally															
9. Session followed up formally															

Please complete schedule at the end of each week of your placement by placing a tick in the relevant box. (Note WK 5* applies only to PGDE students!!)

NOTES : O = OFTEN R = RARELY (occasionally) N = NEVER

1-2 teacher or pupil reading a story to class, group or individual pupils
3-4 'other media' = anything other than a written source (e.g. video/audio/computer/puppet show/etc)
5. chn show engagement by paying attention, smiling, nodding, joining in repetitions etc
6 chn offer positive response by asking questions, making positive comments
7 no follow-up = story complete in itself. No discussion or assessment
8 informal follow up = discussion, question/answer session etc
9 formal follow up = any further task based on comprehension or retention of story detail eg worksheet, comprehension exercise, artwork based on story ideas etc

APPENDIX 7 Story Outlines

1. Whuppity Stoorie

A poor young woman wakes one morning and is upset to find that her pig, which she had hoped to sell at market, has died. As she weeps, an old crone comes along and offers to bring the pig back to life. The young woman, has nothing with which to pay so the crone asks for the young woman's first born child. As she has no children, the young woman rashly agrees. The crone works her magic, brings the pig back to life, and disappears. The young woman is delighted, and subsequently sells the pig for bacon. Some years pass and the young woman marries and has a child. The crone reappears seeking recompense for the magic she performed on the pig, and when the young woman declines to hand over her baby as agreed, the crone agrees that she will forego payment if the young woman can guess her name. She is given three days to come up with the name. The three days draw to a close without the young woman discovering the name of the crone and she wanders in the woods, wondering what to do when she happens upon the crone sitting by a campfire, singing a song to herself *'Little does my lady ken, Whuppity Stoorie is my name'.* When the crone appears the next day to claim the baby, the young woman reveals her knowledge. The crone, incensed, admits defeat and flies off in a rage. The young woman has won, and she and her baby live happily ever after.

2. Tam Lin

Janet lives in Carterhaugh, in the Scottish Borders, on the estate of her well-to-do father. She has the freedom of the estate except for a walled garden wherein, it is said, lives Tam Lin, a mysterious fairy figure who is a danger to all who come into contact with him. Janet is curious and enters the garden, encounters Tam Lin, and falls in love with him. When she returns home, all those in the household watch her begin to waste away from unrequited love. Eventually Janet decides to return to the walled garden to be reunited with Tam Lin. He tells her that he cannot leave the garden because of a spell put on him by the Fairy Queen, but gives Janet a series of instructions which will enable her to break the spell. She follows the instructions in a very dramatic denouement to the story, and she and Tam Lin live happily ever after.

3. The Silkie Wife

A young fisherman who is walking on the shore late one night catches a glimpse of a beautiful Silkie girl dancing on the beach. He hides her sealskin and thus prevents her from returning to her home under the waves. Pretending to take pity on her, he takes her home and they marry. Although they raise a family together, she longs to return to her own people, but cannot do this without the skin. Some years pass, and she comes across the sealskin, hidden from her by her husband, allowing her to return to her Silkie form. Without a backward glance she runs to the shore and rejoins her own folk under the waves, leaving a grieving human family behind her.

4. Scotland's Flag

In the year 832 CE, a battle was fought near the village of Athelstaneford in East Lothian, near Edinburgh, between the Scots and the Angles. On the eve of the battle, the Scots king, Oengus, had a vision in which St. Andrew came to him and promised him victory. The next morning the Scots saw a white cross formed by clouds in the sky. They won the battle, and, attributing their victory to the blessing, they named St. Andrew as their patron saint and adopted the colours and the cross from the vision as their flag.

5. The Prince and the Puddock

This story is based on The Frog Prince, a traditional European fairytale. An old king sets his three sons a series of challenges in order to determine which one of them should inherit his crown. On each occasion, the two older princes set off on an adventure, while the youngest prince is left at home. The distressed youngest prince is helped to meet each of the challenges by a puddock (frog) that comes to his assistance. By the time of the third and final challenge, the puddock insists on being taken into the young prince's chamber by way of thanks. When the final reckoning comes, the three princes have to reveal their chosen brides. At this point the puddock is transformed into a beautiful princess; the youngest prince wins the challenge and is named the king's successor.

APPENDIX 8 Stories Coded by Intended Learning Outcome

Story	Outcomes	Examples
Whuppity Stoorie	**SC**	**Scots folklore** **Links to European folklore** **Scots language and vocabulary** **Storytelling traditions, for example, 'Once upon a time', settings (especially location in time), character archetypes (kings, witches, poor widows), rule of threes (events happen in groups of three in Western storytelling tradition)**
	C	**Improvising on story themes** **Story patterns and rhythms**
	L	**Language of storytelling Once upon a time, happily ever after and so on)** **Scots language and vocabulary** **Expressive and creative use of language** **Links to Rumpelstiltskin story**
	E	**The story is made entertaining by varying pace, use of language, characterisation, introduction of new ideas, use of commentary during the telling, body language, eye contact, and so on, and by responding to signals from the audience (for example, speeding up the story if they look bored, exaggerating sections which seem to appeal)**
Tam Lin	**SC**	**Scots folklore** **Storytelling traditions** **Scots literature**
	PS	**Story themes – parental guidance /folly of youth/ courage/tenacity/love**
	C	**Improvising on story themes** **Story patterns and rhythms**
	L	**Language of storytelling (Once upon a time, happily ever after and so on)** **Expressive and creative use of language** **Links to literature – the Ballad of Tam Lin**
	E	**As above**
The Silkie Wife	**SC**	**Scots folklore** **Storytelling traditions**

	C	**Improvising on story themes** **Story patterns and rhythms**
	L	**Language of storytelling (Once upon a time, happily ever after and so on)** **Expressive and creative use of language** **Scots language and vocabulary**
	E	**As above**
Scotland's Flag	**SC**	**Scots folklore** **Storytelling traditions**
	K	**Links to historical events (the battle of Athelstaneford)** **Links to knowledge about flags and heraldry (how the Union flag was created, how the Scots flag relates to this, design and purpose of flags, heraldic terms)** **Links to religious knowledge (St Andrew the apostle)**
	C	**Improvising on story themes** **Story patterns and rhythms**
	L	**Language of storytelling (Once upon a time, happily ever after and so on)** **Expressive and creative use of language** **Specific vocabulary relating to subject-matter (saltire, azure and so on)**
	E	**As above**
The Prince and the Puddock	**SC**	**Storytelling traditions**
	PS	**Story themes – acceptance/good work is rewarded/every contribution is valid/do the best you can**
	C	**Improvising on story themes** **Story patterns and rhythms**
	L	**Language of storytelling (Once upon a time, happily ever after and so on)** **Expressive and creative use of language** **Scots language and vocabulary**
	E	**As above**

APPENDIX 9 Dundee Primary Pupil Questionnaire

Which story/stories did you hear?

Did you like them?

What were they about?

Did you learn anything?

Any comments?

APPENDIX 10 Results of Dundee Primary School Pupil Questionnaire

Which story	**Did you like it**	**What was it about**	**Did you learn anything**	**comments**
About a king	yes	A king a puddock and a prince	no	It was great
About a frog	yes	It was about a puddock	yes	no
king	yes	A king and his 3 sons	A lot	no
The king story	yes	About 3 brothers	yes	I would like you to come again it was fun
A king story	yes	3 princes 1 king a frog	To believe in yourself	no
The king story	yes	A king blowing a hair out the window for one of his sons to become king	no	no
Story of frog	yes	About a frog	no	Add more..?
The king	Yes I like it	It was about 1 king with 3 sons	no	
A story about a king	yes	It was about a king and a paddock and the kings sons	no	It was too long
The king	Yes yes yes	The king and frog	no	no
We heard about a king	I like them	It was about a puddock	We learned about a king	
frog	yes	About a king and a frog	no	It's a good story
king	yes	A king and his three sons	A lot	no
king	Yes I liked it	About a king with three children	Yes I learned a new word, puddock	No comments
king	yes	A king and his three sons	A lot	no
A story about a king	yes	About 3 princes and a puddock	no	no
The king story	yes	The king and the three princes	no	no
king	yes	A king and his 3 sons	Yes I learned that you don't have to get everything bigger and better because you are just the same	
A king	yes	A king a puddock the kings sons	no	It was too long
A king	yes	A king, a puddock and the king's sons	No	It was too long
A story about a frog	yes	It was about a puddock	yes	no
About a king	Yes I did	A king and a puddock and a prince	no	It was great!
Story of frog	yes	About a frog	no	Add more michk??

APPENDIX 11 Angus Pupil Interview Schedules

(*Prompts in italics)*

Thank you for speaking to me today. First of all, I am going to record our chat so I don't forget anything that you say to me – but I want you to know that I am not going to ask for your name, so you can say anything you like and no-one will know it was you.
I am trying to find out about the stories you like to listen to in the classroom, so that I can help other teachers when they are telling stories to their classes.

1. Can I ask you to tell me how old you are?
2. Do you like to listen to stories in the classroom?
3. What is your favourite story?
4. Why do you like it?
5. What kinds of things make a story good?
    a. *Characters/setting/pictures/…*
6. Are there any kinds of stories you don't like?
7. What do you think makes a story not so good?
8. Are some people (or some teachers) better at telling stories than others? Do you know anyone who is good at telling stories? What do they do?
9. Do you know anyone who isn't good at telling stories? Why not? What do they do?

Is there anything else you want to tell me about stories?

APPENDIX 12 Angus Teacher Interview Schedules

(Prompts in italics)

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. With your permission, I will be recording the interview and I will transcribe it later. I won't keep a copy of the recording, and you will remain completely anonymous in any notes I keep. I will send you a copy of the transcript after the interview so that you can confirm that it is an accurate record of our conversation.

1. Can I first ask you what stage you are currently teaching?
2. Have you always worked with this age group?
3. How long have you been in the teaching profession?
4. Do you use stories in your classroom?
5. How would you define 'story'?
    a. *Does your definition apply only to the written (or spoken) word, or could it include other forms of story – e.g. on video, puppet shows, audio etc?*
2. What would you say in your experience makes a 'good' story for use in the classroom?
    a. What kinds of factors are you looking for?
    b. Can you give me any examples?
    c. Do these criteria ever vary (e.g. according to aims, or audience, or …?)
    d. What kinds of factors do you take into account when you are choosing a story?
        - *Subject (explicit details e.g. characters, setting, plot line)*
        - *Theme (implicit details e.g. messages or ideas that you might wish to explore)*
        - *Language used (e.g. appropriateness of complexity of language for the pupil audience; literary merit (enriched language use – that which is beyond the level of the pupil audience)*
        - *Author (culturally perceived merit of acquainting pupils with the work of an accredited writer)*
        - *Pupil interest (in any of the above)*
        - *Own interest (in any of the above)*
        - *Popular/media interest (in any of the above)*
3. What advice would you give students or inexperienced teachers when choosing stories for use in the classroom?
4. Is there any type of story you would suggest should be avoided for classroom use?
5. What advice would you give them for getting the best out of the stories they use?
6. Is there anything you would suggest students or inexperienced teachers should avoid doing when they use stories in the classroom?
10. Thank you for your helping with this study – is there any aspect of the way you use stories in your classroom that I haven't asked you about, or anything you would like to add?

APPENDIX 13 Angus Teacher Interviews : Collated

1: Steven Primary

QUESTION	TEACHER 1	TEACHER 2	TEACHER 3
Which stage are you currently teaching?	P1	P1	P1/2
How long have you been in the teaching profession?	20 YRS	1 yr	7 yrs
Do you use stories in the classroom?	yes	yes	yes
How would you define the term 'story' ?	Beginning middle and end There is a range of media you can use, not just text	Beginning middle end but it doesn't have to end there – the children can take the story on Oral stories	Creates a setting and image pictures for the children to think about, whether an oral story or a book. Usually has a beginning middle and end. Can be on tape, books, just pictures
What would you say in your experience makes a 'good' story for using in the classroom?	Something they can interact with	Something that engages the children Characters, pictures, the storyline itself	Capture the children's imagination
Do your criteria for a 'good' story ever change – does that vary ?	Depends on focus	It can vary according to class focus	Depends on whether it's purely for enjoyment or related to class work
What factors do you take into consideration when you're selecting stories for use in the classroom?	Illustrations, language (repetition and rhyme in particular) Author, illustrator personal choice	Characters, pictures, the storyline itself, pupils' own interests	Pictures, the story itself, characters, points at which to stop and discuss,subject, theme, level of language author, pupil interest, personal choice
What advice would you give inexperienced teachers when they are choosing stories to use in the classroom?	Choose books you enjoy yourself – be enthusiastic	Set up a nice display so that the children are free to choose the books whenever they want	Choose books you like – because then you are comfortable reading them. Show your enthusiasm

Are there any kinds of stories you would say should be avoided?	Where the language is too complex for the age of the children	Not really – there are some things I wouldn't concentrate on, but I wouldn't hide anything away	Is there such a thing?
Is there any advice you would give an inexperienced teacher for getting the best out of the stories they use in the classroom?	Talk with a colleague to share ideas Read the story first. Take time to enjoy stories,	Make sure there is a good follow-up after the story so the children really think about what the story was about.	Be enthusiastic, and build on the story – use it to build other subjects around (language, drama etc.)
Is there anything inexperienced teachers should avoid doing when they're using story in the classroom?	Every story doesn't have to be a teaching opportunity, don't always try to look for hidden things		Avoid lack of expression in reading, and ensure that you are engaging the children – get them to chat about it
Is there any other aspect of the way you use stories in the classroom that you'd like to talk about?	Sometimes stories can be just for enjoyment and can be a purely social thing	Just have some time to sit down and have a wee read – and give the children time to have their own choice; even if they don't look at the words inside, they are still looking at a nice story and a nice book.	Use books for other activities- think of activities you can do in the classroom that will consolidate their knowledge of books and their own reading

2: North Eden Primary

QUESTION	TEACHER 1	TEACHER 2	TEACHER 3
Which stage are you currently teaching	1/2	2	2/3
How long have you been in the teaching profession	1 yr	15 yrs	22 yrs
Do you use stories in the classroom?	yes	yes	yes
How would you define the term 'story'?	Books, also pictures, plays, oral stories, setting, characters	Fiction, oral stories as well as books, film, tv, dance – any art form	Anything you are telling them - can be fact or fiction, can be from books, or simply anecdotes TV,CD. Beginning, middle, end. Characters and setting
What would you say in your experience makes a 'good"' story for using in the classroom?	Exciting, thought provoking	Engaging, subject matter matched to chn's interest,	Elements of fun or suspense
Do your criteria for a 'good' story ever change – does that vary ?	Varies according to classroom learning needs	Selection criteria can vary depending on purpose	Good stories can be used for a variety of purposes. A good story is a good story.
What factors do you take into consideration when you're selecting stories for use in the classroom?	Link to classroom learning, subject matter, appropriate to age of chn., children's interests,	appropriate level of language, visual support – pictures, puppets or actions, author, own interest, themes, underlying message, current events and media interest.	Funny, or fun, exciting, points in the story at which you can stop and discuss. Not always subject led - sometimes stories are chosen just for the sake of the story. Author. Own interest, popular media attention
What advice would you give inexperienced teachers when they are choosing stories to use in the classroom?	Children have to be engaged by the story, with excitement in it	Read story first so you know where it is going.	Read the book first. Don't be afraid of adapting the words a bit as you go along to suit the stage of the pupils.
Are there any kinds of stories you would say should be avoided?	Scary books	Be aware of children's needs – don't choose a subject that might be upsetting because of their own experiences	Be aware of the children's emotional needs – don't choose upsetting subject matter
Is there any advice you would give an inexperienced teacher for getting	Use vocal expressions, ask questions in order to encourage	Vary vocal expression. Make eye contact with children – don't focus	Enjoy the story! Immerse yourself in the story. Use vocal expression. Don't

the best out of the stories they use in the classroom?	predictions, follow up by discussing it afterwards – although not always –	on book, but share it with the children. Show enthusiasm	be self-conscious
Is there anything inexperienced teachers should avoid doing when they're using story in the classroom?	Encourage discussion and allow children to speak	Avoid looking down at the book all the time. Avoid reading in a monotone	Avoid monotonous reading. Be aware of audience engagement and stop when children are losing attention
Is there any other aspect of the way you use stories in the classroom that you'd like to talk about?	Yes – children sometimes enjoy a longer, serialised story	Stories don't always have to be told by the teacher – the children can read stories themselves or to each other Any reading is good reading when the children are just learning to read	Be aware of the audience and stop before they lose interest

3. Tana Primary

QUESTION	TEACHER 1	TEACHER 2
Which stage are you currently teaching	P1	P1/2
How long have you been in the teaching profession	23YRS	30 YRS
Do you use stories in the classroom?	YES	YES
How would you define the term story ?	Characters, storylines, structure (beginning middle end) TV, DVD, puppets, computer all mentioned as well as books	Puppets, made-up stories, books, tv. Not always a definitive structure, but often beginning middle end – sometimes ending is left off, so children have to make predictions
What would you say in your experience makes a 'good' story for using in the classroom?	Strong characters, repetition (children can be involved)	Subject matter that children have shown interest in.
Do your criteria for a 'good' story ever change – does that vary ?	Stories usually matched to learning intentions	Varies according to age of children
What factors do you take into consideration when you're selecting stories for use in the classroom?	Illustrations, storyline, characters, language appropriate to stage,	Language, author, children's interests
What advice would you give inexperienced teachers when they are choosing stories to use in the classroom?	Read it first, visual appeal, length (not too long)	Read book first. Don't feel obliged to continue with a story if the children aren't engaged by it.
Are there any kinds of stories you would say should be avoided?	Scary stories. Gender issues have to be considered.	
Is there any advice you would give an inexperienced teacher for getting the best out of the stories they use in the classroom?	Get involved in the story, use vocal expressions, show enthusiasm. Make eye contact with audience, make sure audience can see book,	Use expressive voices, puppets , music – repetitive texts are good to encourage participation, use eye contact to keep behaviour in check
Is there anything inexperienced teachers should avoid doing when they're using story in the classroom?	Don't keep interrupting the story – try not to be distracted by interruptions from children. If interest appears to be waning, draw attention back to the story by asking a question	
Is there any other aspect of the way you use stories in the classroom that you'd like to talk about?	Use informational texts as well as fiction. Use puppets or characters when working with young children.	Use the story to extend learning by basing a follow-up activity on the story

4. Wallace Primary

QUESTION	TEACHER 1	TEACHER 2
Which stage are you currently teaching	P1	P1/2
How long have you been in the teaching profession	23YRS	30 YRS
Do you use stories in the classroom?	YES	YES
How would you define the term story ?	Characters, storylines, structure (beginning middle end) TV, DVD, puppets, computer all mentioned as well as books	Puppets, made-up stories, books, tv. Not always a definitive structure, but often beginning middle end – sometimes ending is left off, so children have to make predictions
What would you say in your experience makes a 'good"' story for using in the classroom?	Strong characters, repetition (children can be involved)	Subject matter that children have shown interest in.
Do your criteria for a 'good' story ever change – does that vary ?	Stories usually matched to learning intentions	Varies according to age of children
What factors do you take into consideration when you're selecting stories for use in the classroom?	Illustrations, storyline, characters, language appropriate to stage,	Language, author, children's interests
What advice would you give inexperienced teachers when they are choosing stories to use in the classroom?	Read it first, visual appeal, length (not too long)	Read book first. Don't feel obliged to continue with a story if the children aren't engaged by it.
Are there any kinds of stories you would say should be avoided?	Scary stories. Gender issues have to be considered.	
Is there any advice you would give an inexperienced teacher for getting the best out of the stories they use in the classroom?	Get involved in the story, use vocal expressions, show enthusiasm. Make eye contact with audience, make sure audience can see book	Use expressive voices, puppets , music – repetitive texts are good to encourage participation, use eye contact to keep behaviour in check
Is there anything inexperienced teachers should avoid doing when they're using story in the classroom?	don't keep interrupting the story – try not to be distracted by interruptions from children. If interest appears to be waning, draw attention back to the story by asking a question	
Is there any other aspect of the way you use stories in the classroom that you'd like to talk about?	Use informational texts as well as fiction. Use puppets or characters when working with young children.	Use the story to extend learning by basing a follow-up activity on the story

APPENDIX 14 Angus Teachers' Advice

Is there any advice you would give an inexperienced teacher for getting the best out of the stories they use in the classroom?

Talk with a colleague to share ideas
Read the story first. Take time to enjoy stories,

Make sure there is a good follow-up after the story so the children really think about what the story was about.

Be enthusiastic, and build on the story – use it to build other subjects around (language, drama etc)

Make sure you have read them before! Have the confidence to follow the children's interests and stop if a story you like isn't working

Use stories more than once. Read different stories. Don't try to get everything out of every story . Use stories purely for enjoyment sometimes, make it fun.

Use vocal expressions, ask questions in order to encourage predictions, follow up by discussing it afterwards – although not always –

Vary vocal expression. Make eye contact with children – don't focus on book, but share it with the children. Show enthusiasm

Enjoy the story! Immerse yourself in the story. Use vocal expression. Don't be self-conscious

Get involved in the story, use vocal expressions, show enthusiasm. Make eye contact with audience, make sure audience can see book, don't keep interrupting the story – try not to be distracted by interruptions from children. If interest appears to be waning, draw attention back to the story by asking a question

Use expressive voices, puppets , music – repetitive texts are good to encourage participation, use eye contact to keep behaviour in check

Is there any other aspect of the way you use stories in the classroom that you'd like to talk about?

Use the story to extend learning by basing a follow-up activity on the story

APPENDIX 15 Angus Pupil/Teacher Interviews Indexed

STEVEN PRIMARY: Pupil Interview 1 responses, indexed according to theme

KEY (1):

THEME	CODE	THEME	CODE
Title	T	Presentation	P
Story content/subject matter/plot	C	Gender references	G
Visual aspects (e.g. pictures)	V	Issues of age-appropriateness	A
Style (use of language/genre)	S	Technical references	Tech
Characters (by name)	Ch	Length of story	L
Medium	M	Home-school references	HS

KEY (2)

Me = interviewer
P = pupil interviewee
------? = uncertainty of transcript due to unclear speech/recording

TRANSCRIPT		CODE
Me	Will you tell me how old you are?	
P	6/6/6/6/5/6/5	
Me	Do you like to listen to stories in your classroom?	
P	Yes (all)	
Me	Tell me, what's your favourite story?	
P	The Whale Song	T
Me	Why do you like The Whale Song?	
P	It sings on the DVD	M
P	K – remember we had the songs of it?	M
P	Yeah	
P	Well I think that was the DVD of it	M
P	My favourite is James and the giant peach	T
(Several children join in) James and the giant peach!		T
P	I think I had the film of it but I don't know where it is now	M
Me	Why do is that your favourite?	
P	Because it's so funny	S
	Well, when the peach is rolling away	C
P	And it goes into the sea	C
P	And they try to stop it and it goes under the sea	C
P	My favourite is the duck book	C
Me	Why is the duck book your favourite?	
P	Because when you ------? Because you've got to turn the page .. and the duck isn't on every page but at the end you find the duck	V

Me So it's good joining in with it? Tell me about your favourite story	
P Chimp and Zee	T
Me Why is Chimp and Zee your favourite?	
P Because I like monkeys	C
P Mine is A Diary of a Tooth Fairy	T
Me Is that one you've got at home?	
P *(agrees)* I like it because instead of chapters it has days	Tech
Me Why is that so good?	
P Because it's different and fairies are in it and they have to collect teeth	C
P My favourite is Frog and the Bath	T
Me Tell me about that one	
P There's mud in it and the frog has to get in the bath and it doesn't want to go in the bath	C
Me And is that a funny story?	
P Its my own	HS
Me What kinds of things do you think make stories good?	
P Pictures	V
P And reading	S
P Reading the blurb	Tech
Me Why is that good?	
P Because it tells you about it	Tech
Me So that helps you to know if you like it or not?	
P If you don't like it you just put it back and if you weren't sure you just read it so you would know what it was about	Tech
P if you were writing about a story you would just read the writing and see what's in the book and if you didn't want to go and read that book you could go into another book	Tech
Me Does a story have to be in a book?	
P No	M
Me Where else can it be?	
P It can – you can make on one up yourself	M
P Or it can be on a CD	M
P You could just make a book up	M
P If you were trying to make a book and you didn't know how to write you could just do the pictures	M
Me What other things can make a story good? What about the characters?	

P	no	Ch
Me	What about what happens in the story – can that make it good or bad?	
P	Good	C
Me	Are there any kinds of stories you don't like?	
P	Boys' stories	G
Me	Is everybody agreed, or do some of the girls like boys stories?	
P	Yes	G
Me	You like boys' stories?	
P	Yes	G
P	I like girls' stories	G
Me	You like girls' stories, K?	
P	Some boys' stories are good and some girls' stories are good	G
P	I would like a book if it had girls and boys	G
Me	And some stories are for girls and boys	G
P	Its everybody's	G
P	Like Frog and the Bath	T
Me	Are there any stories you don't like?	
P	Fairies	C
P	I don't like Postman Pat	Ch
Me	What kinds of things make a story not so good?	
P	When you don't read it	A
Me	What does that mean?	
P	When you are little you don't know what the words say	A
P	When you're a baby	A
P	If there's no pictures and colours	V
Me	Do you think some people are better at telling stories? Do you know anyone who is good at telling stories? What do they do?	
P	Yeah	
P	Mum and Dad. They read hard books to me	HS/A
P	The teacher	
P	She tells us all the story	P
P	The library	
P	They get books that we like	C
P	The librarian gets books that ----------?	
Me	Do you know anyone who is not good at telling stories? Why not? What do they do?	
P	A bad person	P
P	They would read a bad book	C

P	Little babies, because they are only little	A
P	My friend B is only two and she says 'I'll read you a book, ' and she only holds the book and she says just one word and then she turns the page	A
Me	What would someone who isn't good at telling stories be doing wrong?	
P	They would have to sound it out	P
P	That would make it boring	P
P	When you don't read it properly	P
P	When you don't see pictures	V
Me	Does anyone have anything else they want to say about stories?	
P	No	

APPENDIX 16 Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development
(Atherton, 2010)

Stage	Characterised by
Sensori-motor **(Birth-2 yrs)**	Differentiates self from objects Recognises self as agent of action and begins to act intentionally: e.g. pulls a string to set mobile in motion or shakes a rattle to make a noise **Achieves object permanence: realises that things continue to exist even when no longer present to the sense**
Pre-operational **(2-7 years)**	Learns to use language and to represent objects by images and words Thinking is still egocentric: has difficulty taking the viewpoint of others **Classifies objects by a single feature: e.g. groups together all the red blocks regardless of shape or all the square blocks regardless of colour**
Concrete operational **(7-11 years)**	Can think logically about objects and events Achieves conservation of number (age 6), mass (age 7), and weight (age 9) **Classifies objects according to several features and can order them in series along a single dimension such as size.**
Formal operational **(11 years and up)**	Can think logically about abstract propositions and test hypotheses systematically **Becomes concerned with the hypothetical, the future, and ideological problems**

APPENDIX 17 National Teachers' Survey
(reproduction of electronic version)

USE OF STORY IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CLASSROOM

106623 | 107744959 | 106781

YOUR DETAILS

1. Please note your teaching experience (in years)

○ NQT ○ 1-5 ○ 6-10 ○ 11-15 ○ 16+

2. Please note your gender

○ MALE ○ FEMALE

3. What class do you currently teach?

Select an answer

If you selected Other, please specify:

4. Please indicate the LEA for which you work

Select an answer

STORY IN THE CLASSROOM

5. How often is story used in your classroom?

○ NEVER
○ ONCE A MONTH
○ SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH
○ ONCE A WEEK
○ SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK
○ EVERY DAY

Other *(please specify)*:

HOW ARE STORIES USED IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

Please rate your answers on a scale of 0-5, where 0=never and 5=frequently.

6. Are these stories mostly

- oral (from memory or read from books)
- electronic (video/film/CD rom/etc)
- Other *(please specify)*:

STORY SOURCES

Please rate your answers on a scale of 0-5, where 0=never and 5=frequently

106623	107744970	106781

SOURCES

How often do you use the following as sources for your stories?

7. Own experiences

0 1 2 3 4 5

8. Book

0 1 2 3 4 5

9. Traditional sources

0 1 2 3 4 5

10. Other source

0 1 2 3 4 5

GENRES

How often do you use the following types of story?

0 1 2 3 4 5

12. Fiction (other)

0 1 2 3 4 5

13. Non-fiction (inc history and religious stories)

0 1 2 3 4 5

14. Please list other genres used (if any) *(Optional)*

STORY SELECTION

Who selects the stories you use in your classroom?

15. Class teacher

0 1 2 3 4 5

16. Pupils

0 1 2 3 4 5

17. Other

0 1 2 3 4 5

18. If "other", whom? *(Optional)*

YOUR PURPOSES AND AIMS IN THE USE OF STORY

Please rate your answers on a scale of 0-5, where 0=never and 5=frequently. 106623 107744986 106781

WHY DO YOU USE STORY IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

19. Purely for pleasure/enjoyment/entertainment

0 1 2 3 4 5

20. To help explore emotional issues

0 1 2 3 4 5

21. To support curricular aims

0 1 2 3 4 5

22. To support general language development

0 1 2 3 4 5

23. To promote interest in books and literature

0 1 2 3 4 5

24. To provide a social bond within the group

0 1 2 3 4 5

25. To promote general educational aims (e.g. encourage thinking skills)

0 1 2 3 4 5

26. To encourage creativity and imagination

0 1 2 3 4 5

27. To promote an understanding of society and culture

0 1 2 3 4 5

28. To promote a social/political/philosophical/religious message

0 1 2 3 4 5

29. For any other reason not previously listed. Please explain *(Optional)*

30. Have your story choices been influenced by any of the following (select all that apply): *(Optional)*
(select all that apply)

- Personal recommendation(family, friends, etc)
- Professional recommendation (colleagues, staff tutors, etc)
- CPD
- Education Scotland (formerly LTS)
- Library Service
- Scottish Storytelling Centre links (courses, visits, website)
- Professional reviews (eg in TES, Scholastic publications)
- Newspapers/magazines
- Published programmes of work (eg Telling Tales, Stories for Thinking, Bounceback recommended texts)

- [ ] Scholastic Book Fairs
- [ ] Local Theatre Projects (eg Pantomimes, book-based children's productions)
- [ ] BBC/C4 Learning Units (TV or audio)
- [ ] Current TV programmes or cinema releases
- [ ] Other *(please specify)*:

HOW ARE STORIES SELECTED FOR USE IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

31. To meet curricular aims?

0 1 2 3 4 5

32. To meet another specific purpose (e.g. social/emotional etc)?

0 1 2 3 4 5

33. Solely on the basis of pupil interest?

0 1 2 3 4 5

34. Solely on the basis of own preferences?

0 1 2 3 4 5

35. Based on attractiveness of illustrations?

0 1 2 3 4 5

36. Based on use of language?

0 1 2 3 4 5

37. Any other reason not already listed? Please state *(Optional)*

DOES IT WORK? HOW DO YOU EVALUATE WHETHER OR NOT THE STORY HAS MET YOUR PURPOSES?

38. The children show engagement (e.g.positive responses/request repeats/they retell the story)

0 1 2 3 4 5

39. Formal assessment (e.g. worksheet, comprehension exercise, etc)

0 1 2 3 4 5

40. Informal assessment (e.g. discussion, Q/A etc)

0 1 2 3 4 5

41. Other method not already listed. If so, please describe below *(Optional)*

APPENDIX 18 List of Schools Contacted (National Survey)

Email contact was made with individual schools from the following LEAs at the end of the second week of the survey:

LEA	No. of schools contacted
Aberdeenshire	151
Clackmannanshire	19
Dumfries and Galloway	103
East Ayrshire	46
East Dunbartonshire	36
East Lothian	35
East Renfrewshire	24
Highlands	180
Midlothian	28
North Ayrshire	53
Orkney Islands	19
South Lanarkshire	126
Scottish Borders	64
West Dunbartonshire	34
Western Isles	29
TOTAL NO. OF SCHOOLS CONTACTED	947

Email contact was made with individual schools from the following LEAs at the end of the fourth week of the survey:

LEA	No. of schools contacted
Clackmannanshire	19
Dumfries and Galloway	103
East Dunbartonshire	36
Highlands	180
Orkney Islands	28
Scottish Borders	19
TOTAL NO. OF SCHOOLS CONTACTED	385

Section 1: YOUR DETAILS

1. Please note your teaching experience (in years)		
NQT:	5.5%	40
1-5:	17.9%	130
5-10:	17.4%	127
10-15:	15.8%	115
15+:	43.4%	316

2. Please note your gender		
MALE:	9.5%	69
FEMALE:	90.5%	659

3. What class do you currently teach?		
P1:	10.7%	78
P2:	7.4%	54
P3:	8.9%	65
P4:	8.4%	61
P5:	6.9%	50
P6:	8.5%	62
P7:	7.6%	55
Other *(please specify)*:	41.6%	303

4. Please indicate the LEA for which you work

Local Education Authority			**Local Education Authority**		
ABERDEEN CITY	5.1%	37	INVERCLYDE	0%	0
ABERDEENSHIRE	1.9%	14	MIDLOTHIAN	3.0%	22
ANGUS	5.6%	41	MORAY	4.3%	32
ARGYLL & BUTE	4.6%	34	NORTH AYRSHIRE	2.7%	20
CLACKMANNAN-SHIRE	1.1%	8	NORTH LANARKSHIRE	4.3%	32
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY	1.6%	12	ORKNEY ISLANDS	1.6%	12
DUNDEE CITY	9.8%	72	PERTH & KINROSS	6.5%	48
EAST AYRSHIRE	1.7%	13	RENFREWSHIRE	2.6%	19
EAST DUNBARTON-SHIRE	0.8%	6	SCOTTISH BORDERS	2.1%	15
EAST LOTHIAN	1.4%	10	SHETLAND ISLANDS	2.8%	21
EAST RENFREWSHIRE	1.6%	12	SOUTH AYRSHIRE	1.4%	10
EDINBURGH CITY	4.6%	34	SOUTH LANARKSHIRE	1.7%	13
FALKIRK	3.5%	26	STIRLING	2.3%	17
FIFE	8.5%	62	WEST DUNBARTON-SHIRE	1.5%	11
GLASGOW CITY	3.9%	29	WEST LOTHIAN	3.1%	23
HIGHLAND	1.2%	9	WESTERN ISLES	1.9%	14

Section 2: STORY IN THE CLASSROOM

5. How often is story used in your classroom?		
NEVER:	0.7%	5
ONCE A MONTH:	2.7%	20
SEVERAL TIMES A MONTH:	8.7%	63
ONCE A WEEK:	7.3%	53
SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK:	45.7%	333
EVERY DAY:	32.7%	238
Other *(please specify)*:	2.2%	16

Section 3: HOW ARE STORIES USED IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

6. Are these stories mostly		
oral (from memory or read from books):	85.2%	620
electronic (video/film/CD rom/etc):	8.1%	59
Other *(please specify)*:	6.7%	49

Section 4: SOURCES

7. Own experiences		
0:	4.6%	31
1:	17.8%	119
2:	20.2%	135
3:	26.6%	178
4:	16.9%	113
5:	13.8%	92

8. Book		
0:	0.1%	1
1:	0.9%	6
2:	0.9%	6
3:	7.5%	50
4:	28.7%	192
5:	61.8%	413

9. Traditional sources		
0:	1.5%	10
1:	8.4%	56
2:	11.1%	74
3:	24.1%	161

4:	29.0%	194
5:	25.9%	173

10. Other source		
0:	5.8%	39
1:	14.7%	98
2:	25.0%	167
3:	30.4%	203
4:	15.9%	106
5:	8.2%	55

Section 5: GENRES

11. Traditional tales/myths/folklore		
0:	1.5%	10
1:	9.0%	60
2:	17.2%	115
3:	34.6%	231
4:	25.0%	167
5:	12.7%	85

12. Fiction (other)		
0:	0.4%	3
1:	0.6%	4
2:	1.8%	12
3:	10.2%	68
4:	36.5%	244
5:	50.4%	337

13. Non-fiction (inc history and religious stories)		
0:	0.7%	5
1:	4.0%	27
2:	16.9%	113
3:	33.5%	224
4:	32.2%	215
5:	12.6%	84

14. Please list other genres used (if any)
Audio books Videos CD stories cd story tapes children's own life stories children's own stories frequently used

Children's own stories- introduced as mystery author. Poetry Stories written in Scots
Current affairs - e.g. Newsround
dialect stories
During Literature Circles it is the choice of the pupil.
DVD religious stories
DVD, Internet resources, GLOW
DVD, Videos, on-line resources
experiences, newspaper/magazine articles
Film, v. occasionally
graphic novels
Graphic Novels - 2
Graphic novels and comics also used only occasionally though
Imaginative story based learning from learning unlimited and the Land of Me.
Intending to support teachers in using 'inanimate alice' with upper primary this term (multi modal)
made up stories using items that ch'n give
magazine/newspaper articles account
make up a class story orally going round in a circle, each child adding on to the story.
Media texts Poetry Animated stories
modern stories
Moving Image Education
Mystery, adventure...as stimulus for writing
Narrative poetry I make up my own stories! We create stories in the classroom using drama/children's experiences/interests
News
News articles
News reports
Newspaper Website
Newspaper articles of current events.
Newspapers
newspapers comics smart board
Newspapers Poems
Nursery Rhymes
personal writing made up by children in class
picture books to engage pupils in creating own ideas for text
plays
plays /poems oral story telling traditions
Play scripts
Poems
Poems and plays
poems and riddles
Poetry
Poetry
poetry
Poetry
Poetry
Poetry
Poetry
poetry
Poetry
Poetry
poetry
Poetry
Poetry
Poetry
Poetry
poetry
poetry
POETRY
Poetry
Poetry
poetry
poetry
poetry
poetry
Poetry
poetry
poetry
Poetry Cine literacy
Poetry Graphic novels Scots language
POETRY LEAFLETS
Poetry Modern fantasy comics play scripts
poetry plays
Poetry Plays
poetry plays
poetry pupils' stories

Poetry Reading Scheme stories Poetry Story poems poetry / rhyme Poetry / rhymes Poetry /scots poetry /french Poetry eg Tam O'Shanter Poetry is used on occassion as a stimulus Poetry most days and occasional plays poetry often used poetry song Poetry Stories You Tube stories poetry, drama scripts, pictorial stories for children to tell themselves, stories to be told from object stimulus by teacher or pupils poetry, news, song POETRY, PLAYS, FICTION AND NON FICTION poetry, rhymes Poetry,Nursery rhymes poetry,songs and rhymes 5 Poetry/traditional rhyme popular culture (movies, musicals, playscripts) current affairs (news report stimulus etc) auto/biographies selected by pupils scots dialect poetry etc cartoons and comic strips links to cross curricular themes Real-life situations ie re. social issues e.g. bullying, /keeping safe etc. stories can be real or fictional to get a message across Religion Sci-Fi science fiction and stories involving witchcraft/wizards SciFi Scots Language Screening Shots - films on GLOW Story tapes Story tellers invited into school tv programmes online books and stories Social stories Social stories often from health and wellbeing resources. Used to help in behaviour discussions. Often a child not admit to doing something - but will dsicuss a story where another child/character does nearly the same thing. song writing to tell stories about history of the local area. Start a story and get class to continue with it Stories about my own experiences or children's to develop learning context or use as an explanation to help children understand the reason behind something Stories from current news stories in the news video clips horrible histories greek myths etc video clips online video computer We make up our own stories as a class. Eg turning a traditional story into a scottish story with the children's favourite words

Section 6: STORY SELECTION

15. Class teacher		
0:	0.3%	2
1:	1.3%	9
2:	5.5%	37
3:	26.3%	176
4:	41.2%	275
5:	25.3%	169

16. Pupils		
0:	0.4%	3
1:	6.4%	43
2:	17.2%	115
3:	41.9%	280

4:	21.6%	144
5:	12.4%	83

17. Other		
0:	46.0%	307
1:	24.7%	165
2:	13.3%	89
3:	12.1%	81
4:	2.4%	16
5:	1.5%	10

18. If "other", whom?

- following a programme such as "bounce Back"- using suggested texts
A parent will state a child's preference at that time and this will be accomodated.
Advice from other teachers.
Advuce or recommendations from colleagues, library staff or outside agencies
Another staff member for a specific purpose
As they occur in other schemes
ASN Auxilliary
ASN Auxilliary Teaching Students
ASNAS
assistant
Author visits, author glowmeets,recordings of people reading their own and other's work.
Author's Live
Authority recommends novels studied for readin.
bilingual support teacher bilingual assistant (stories in the home language)
Buddies, SFL, Classroom assistants, work experience student
C.A. parents
C.As
CA, RCT teacher, SMT at assemblies, parent helpers, student teachers
CAs, librarian
Children often bring stories in from home to read at nursery.
Children select own readers i select class reader we decide together on dvd or video
class assistant
Classroom assistant
classroom assistant
classroom assistant
Classroom Assistant
classroom assistant head teacher
Classroom assistant Parents
Classroom Assistant & ASN Auxiliary
classroom assistant/auxiliary
Classroom assistants
classroom assistants
Classroom assistants and Parent helpers sometimes bring a story from home or select one belonging to the school
Classroom asst, RCT teacher
Cluster requirements for P7/S1 transition
curriculum leads the activity at times
Curriculum planning resources.
Depute Head, ASN Teacher, Parent
Depute headteacher
early Intervention assistant/ PSA/ older children
Early Year Practitioners
Early Years Workers
Educational Auxiliary
Educational Resource Service when we request books for our topic
EIA will often select 'Big Books' for use with less able pupils
For events
from a pack/recommendation
from Authors Live @ BBC, informed by Head Teacher.
From class topic or interests of the children, sometimes the children take up their own books
guest speakers, HT

Head Teacher
Head teacher
Head teacher, other teaching staff, parents
head teacher/dht/stage partners
HEADTEACHER FOR NCCT
headteacher or cluster group
Headteacher or specific stories indicated on a plan to be used with a particular topic (storyline approach)
HT Supply staff EYW
If recommended in world book day activities or by colleagues.
If we use lessons from Literacy World Scheme then it dictates the stories I use.
inout from homework with parents joint texts suggested by partner schools
Invited authors Other teachers and Pupil Support Assistants
Learning Assistants
Learning Assistants may select stories when supervising during inclement intervals. Parents have also taken part in story telling duiring events such as world book day in which case they select the story.
learning partners in P1
Learning Support teacher
librarian
librarian
Librarian assistant
library service other staff
Libriarian from local library
Local Library Parents
local story tellers websites
Lucky dip
management
Management team
may be in conjunction with primary school
maybe an author visit or a theme dont go with strangers
My assemblies are generated by the pupils. This session they have all been story linked
Myself
Myself as the drama specialist
no-one
North lanarkshire Authority, Literacy Base
North lanarkshire novel study list
Novel studies selected by local authority
Nursery Nurse
Nursery Nurse/Nursery nurse student
Nursery Nurse/Students
Nursery nurses
Nursery Nurses, Learnin assistant,Parents Bi-LIngual support assistant
nursery student
occasionally a visiting librarian, author or other visitor
Occasionally visiting specialists e.g music, or other visitor for example a doctor or lifeboat man might leave a book for us to read as a class.
other class teachers, parents, headteacher
other member of staff
Other members of Nursery Team-ECPs, Students
other staff
other staff
other staff eg Head Teacher in assemblies etc
other teacher
other teachers
other teachers
other teachers or classroom assistant
Outside agency Previous teacher - avaiable resources
Parent other members of staff
parent / carer
Parent helpers
parents
Parents
parents
PARENTS
Parents
parents other members of staff
parents other teachers C.A.
parents teachers
parents visitors
Parents dual language books
Parents often send material in that their children have enjoyed.
parents suggest children's interests
Parents suggesting or bringing in a book or story
parents, other classroom staff
parents, other staff
Parents, other teachers' recommendations

Parents, school librarian and SLA
parents, students and guest readers (authors etc)
parents/carers
Partipate in story-telling sessions at local library.
Perhaps another teacher who is covereing class, a recommended book by someone.
Podcasts, glow 'live web broadcasts'
Prescribed
professional storyteler
PSA or other teacher or pupils from another class
psa or others
PSA or student teacher
Pupil support assistant
Pupil support assistant
Pupil Support Assistants
Pupils often bring in books from home.
Random selection
Reading Scheme etc.
Recommendations from LA or outside agencies.
recommendations from others suggestions received on line
Recommended on GLOW or librarian.
School focus chosen by SMT or working party for example
School librarian
Scottish Book Awards Topic
Scottish Book Trust Competition
Secondary pupils, parents, librarian
Senior management/class teacher will give me a specific incident they want to be "tackled" with the child.
SfL teacher, after author visit or Glow/ Scottish Book Trust author event
SlA
SLA
SLA, Student
SLT PSA
SMT LA
SMT for particular areas
Some visiting speakers. Sometimes other staff members.
Sometimes a visitor to the classroom
Sometimes another teacher or adult
Sometimes in response to current news events like book awards or to follow topic info librarians or other class teachers etc may recommend
Sometimes its associated to a particular part of curriculum eg, Bible stories
Sometimes the class has a book study which has been decided by management.
Sometimes the class teacher has a specific topic she wants me to do. Class Teacher above means me!
Sometimes the Head Teacher recommends sources, parents put in books they think will interest the pupils or complement learning. Our classroom assistant has a talented sister who is an author of childrens books and donated copies of these books.
Sometimes we are encouraged to read from set texts as part of set class work.
sometimes we are given a theme to follow and story suggested
Sometimes we are guided by eg World Book Day recommendations or authority
Sometimes we have grandparents etc in to tell stories and they would select their own.
Stories which are set out in Programmes of Work. e.g. Reading Books, RME, Drama
story teller
Student
student or texts set by SMT
Students and LA and pupils from P7 involved in Paired reading
Students, SMT members, parents.
Students, parent helpers, depute.
suggestions from teaching resources
supply staff McCrone teacher Depute school chaplain outside visitors bring stories with them
Supply teachers often bring their own.
SUPPORT ASSISTANTS VISITORS
Support staff
support staff or visiting staff
Support teacher
SUPPORT TEACHER
Support team and community members
support worker , parent recommendations, nursery
Support staff
teacher covering non class contact
Visiting authors
visiting authors visiting speakers support staff
Visiting authors, school chaplain
visiting specialists Mccrone teacher school chaplain
visiting story teller
Visiting story tellers
visitor helper
Visitor to the class.

Visitors visitors visitors Visitors e.g. storytellers Visitors relating stories about their country etc. Visitors to the school e.g. people giving various talks, minister etc. Visitors to the school linked to topic of interest and/or study. Visitors/speakers to my class Visitors, "Reading Champions" , parents When going to the likes of the Book Festival or other event, I would introduce the children to some work by the relevant author.

Section 7: WHY DO YOU USE STORY IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

19. Purely for pleasure/enjoyment/entertainment		
0:	0.5%	3
1:	3.0%	19
2:	7.2%	45
3:	22.8%	142
4:	30.6%	191
5:	35.9%	224

20. To help explore emotional issues		
0:	1.1%	7
1:	5.0%	31
2:	13.1%	82
3:	34.9%	218
4:	31.4%	196
5:	14.4%	90

21. To support curricular aims		
0:	0.2%	1
1:	0.5%	3
2:	1.4%	9
3:	16.2%	101
4:	40.2%	251
5:	41.5%	259

22. To support general language development		
0:	0.3%	2
1:	1.0%	6
2:	2.1%	13
3:	10.3%	64
4:	33.0%	206
5:	53.4%	333

23. To promote interest in books and literature		
0:	0.2%	1
1:	0.6%	4
2:	1.0%	6
3:	8.2%	51
4:	27.4%	171
5:	62.7%	391

24. To provide a social bond within the group		
0:	1.4%	9
1:	6.9%	43
2:	14.4%	90
3:	30.9%	193
4:	26.6%	166
5:	19.7%	123

25. To promote general educational aims (e.g. encourage thinking skills)		
0:	0.5%	3
1:	2.1%	13
2:	4.8%	30
3:	24.2%	151
4:	37.0%	231
5:	31.4%	196

26. To encourage creativity and imagination		
0:	0.2%	1
1:	0.8%	5
2:	3.4%	21
3:	16.0%	100
4:	35.3%	220
5:	44.4%	277

27. To promote an understanding of society and culture		
0:	0.8%	5
1:	3.7%	23
2:	13.6%	85
3:	33.5%	209
4:	32.5%	203
5:	15.9%	99

28. To promote a social/political/philosophical/religious message		
0:	2.1%	13
1:	9.8%	61
2:	21.5%	134
3:	36.5%	228
4:	21.3%	133
5:	8.8%	55

29. For any other reason not previously listed. Please explain:
as a basis for storywriting
as a stimulus for discussion
As a stimulus for interdisciplinary/cross curricular learning
As a way of developing an understanding of the link between stories in books and films.
behavioural
calm down after an excitng activity
Calm, quiet time, enjoyment
Content may be educational and link to topic or other current work, for example a book about the history of the Olympics would be relevant at the moment. I often read and discuss books that build on a particular child's interest e.g. 'Billy really likes firemen so lets read this book and perhaps Billy can explain to the class some of the content'.
Current news, remembrance days
enjoyment
Great talking and thinking points - - -my assemblies have a wide range of pupils at one time
health and wellbeing
I can use specific " phonic sound" stories - helps the pupils listen/see the words in a context.
I often use stories to provide a stimulus and model for writing activities and as a basis to project work across the whole curriculum. I always start the academic year with a story study - for example this year we began with "The Mousehole Cat" by Antonia Barber. I based all activities around this and our special day toy who the children take home is "Mowser" from the story.
Improve spoken English. Improve listening skills.
It is a very important medium for my pupils accessing the curriculum. It is also something familiar in their lives.
language immersion/ normalisation
language immersion/ normalisation
Modelling good reading and a love of books/literacy
Often use story to provide characters pupils can relate to. I then use these characters to support their learning in further lessons across the curriculum. To provide creative starters that act as springboards into other areas of learning.
Particularly for teaching philosophical inquiry and health and wellbeing
pleasure
promote scottish language
Social stories used for children with Additional Support Needs
Support of particular authors
To bring calm to the class after a particularly busy, noisy or active period.To allow children to rest, relax.
to encourage the children to stop, slow down and enjoy a quiet, calm environment
To get young Scottish citizens into a healthy routine of reading books and exploring different types of literature.
to give the experience to children who are not read to at home
to help children to try to make sense of difficult experiences in their lives, 'second hand' through story characters which is less threatening and also can help to normalise their experiences
To illustrate example of work required
To improve listening skills
To improve second language skills
To reach all learners.
Use of dual language books to promote other langauges and to make language connections
writing skills

30. Have your story choices been influenced by any of the following (select all that apply):		
Personal recommendation(family, friends, etc):	n/a	531

Professional recommendation (colleagues, staff tutors, etc):	n/a	554
CPD:	n/a	305
Education Scotland (formerly LTS):	n/a	109
Library Service:	n/a	362
Scottish Storytelling Centre links (courses, visits, website):	n/a	160
Professional reviews (eg in TES, Scholastic publications):	n/a	225
Newspapers/magazines:	n/a	272
Published programmes of work (eg Telling Tales, Stories for Thinking, Bounceback recommended texts):	n/a	227
Scholastic Book Fairs:	n/a	276
Local Theatre Projects (eg Pantomimes, book-based children's productions):	n/a	151
BBC/C4 Learning Units (TV or audio):	n/a	111
Current TV programmes or cinema releases:	n/a	248
Other *(please specify)*:	n/a	81

Am Baile, BBC Alba
amazon/local book shops/literature book winners
Author's Live bbc Scotland Schools broadcasts.
authors
Authors visits, Scottish Book Trust, Local book shop
availability of resources plays a huge part too
Aythor visits to school
BBC Alba
Book shops with their latest releases
Books I have found in bookshops, libraries and second hand shops
books that I have read and enjoyed as a child stories that relate to current affairs and popular culture financial constraints limit choice local authority book lists/recommendations
Bounceback resillience programme recommendations
Browsing bookshops, my own library of books collected over many years.
browsing in book shops and on amazon
Browsing through the bookshop. Talking to pupils about their interests. What I need to deliver the learning and teaching I plan for pupils.
By work in Forest Schools By Children's reading / experiences By happenstance
children bringing in books from home
Children choice from home
children's interest class topics
Children's reading/ recommendations Browsing book shops
children's recommendations
Children's recommendations Secondary school recommendations
childrens interest in subject,author, character
Class entered the Blue Cross writing competition for the release of 'The Warhorse'.
current affairs (eg anniversary of dickens); films that the kids might go and see (eg how to train your dragon); topics we are studying in class (eg tudors ... look at shakespeare)
current curricular work issues aring in class children's interests
Current events in the classroom Current foci in the classroom
Current work being done by class
Curriculum Children's input Own experience of stories I heard and past experience of success/or not of using particular stories
Daily news site on GLOW
Favourite books selected by children New books by favourite authors
General internet research
genre based on class learning contexts
Glow
Google results on specific social stories required.Phonic websites.
Internet links, Amazon reviews
Letterbox Library
linked to topic
LINKED TO TOPIC OR BOOK STUDY EG THE OWL WHO WAS AFRAID OF THE DARK

Links with topic work. My own personal experiences e.g. 'My wee boy is scared of the dark. Have any of you felt like that? Here is a story..' I also often tell stories involving my own children as the pupils really like that.
Sometimes I buy books on family outings and share them with the class as a great discussion starter as well as for enjoyment and the reasons mentioned in 19 to 29.
local story tellers
Lovereading4kids - -online children's book reviews etc
LoveReading4Kids online site
Many of the stories I choose are stories which I or my own children enjoyed when young, books I have discovered by browsing on amazon for topic related texts.
My choices seem to be mostly influenced by what children are interested in or talking about. We also use stories to extend ideas in the reading scheme (ORT)
My own childhood favourites
My own choice and pupils recommendations
My own enjoyment of a book or story as a child
my own knowledge and research into stories
Nar moving Image Older TV/Film/DVD
North Lanarkshire novel guide
Online research
Other Cultures Current topics in classroom
Own children
own research eg browsing in book shops
personal preference and experience and finding resources that fulfill required criteria.
Pupil interest
Pupil recommendations or interest
Pupils favourite books - I encourage them to recommend and share books from home
Reactions and suggestions of pupils
Recommendations from children
Recommendations from school librarian
Retelling of personal events either by me or children in the class
Scholastic have excellent stories e.g. maths readers.
School Library
Scottish Book Trust
Scottish Book Trust
sCottish book trust author i like
SCRAN
sometimes an extract in a reading book prompts to find the whole story Find a story connected with theme for added information or fun
Stories/poems/non-fiction books I loved at school
Storyspinners
to fit in with topics, children's interests, time of year, etc
Topic Boxes
Topic related stories, my own favourites as a child, or my own children's favourites
topics children
Travelling Books
Visiting local authors.
Web links to children's own interests
What children bring in - then try and find more of that type/genre

Section 8: HOW ARE STORIES SELECTED FOR USE IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

31. To meet curricular aims?		
0:	0.6%	4
1:	1.4%	9
2:	5.4%	34
3:	24.2%	151
4:	36.5%	228
5:	31.7%	198

32. To meet another specific purpose (e.g. social/emotional etc)?		
0:	1.0%	6
1:	3.7%	23

2:	9.8%	61
3:	38.1%	238
4:	31.4%	196
5:	16.0%	100

33. Solely on the basis of pupil interest?		
0:	1.0%	6
1:	4.5%	28
2:	14.1%	88
3:	35.3%	220
4:	28.2%	176
5:	17.0%	106

34. Solely on the basis of own preferences?		
0:	4.2%	26
1:	10.6%	66
2:	23.2%	145
3:	37.7%	235
4:	18.8%	117
5:	5.6%	35

35. Based on attractiveness of illustrations?		
0:	9.0%	56
1:	16.8%	105
2:	22.0%	137
3:	28.5%	178
4:	15.7%	98
5:	8.0%	50

36. Based on use of language?		
0:	0.6%	4
1:	2.4%	15
2:	6.4%	40
3:	24.5%	153
4:	41.8%	261
5:	24.2%	151

37. Any other reason not already listed? Please state
Add to topic work As part of Reading Circles availability in the school and my home stock

Because they seem to address an issue that may be relevant to a particular child's needs Books are selected usually by children in Library time when they have found a book they think the class would like. When we read a book we enjoyed we usually try to read another book by the same author. Children sometimes bring in their own books or books they get from the library related to something we've been discussing in class Children's choice Choices are often made if they provide a context for learning e.g. we are currently doing a topic on Water and we have used the context of being shipwrecked on a desert island so we have chosen to read (an adapted) Robinson Crusoe Choosing texts that are going to be suitably challenging for a particular age group. connection to current project/topic work. Current topic work, a favourite author, use of rhyme. dual language EXAMPLES OF EG DESCRIPTIVE WRITING OR SCENE SETTING exciting story lines that will engage the reader/listener. Feel 31/32 blend for me - health and wellbeing is very much part of the curriculum for me. Age dependent for 35- open a picture will really aid a discussion more than a story. Fits with topic For inclusion purposes - e.g. E.A.L. I choose books I think my class will enjoy, based on what they are interested in and what they've enjoyed previously. If they enjoy a book, I try to give them several books by the same author or on a similar theme/topic. In topic boxes frome the library service.Children bring favourite books from home to share. Interactive books e.g. flap books Length - around 5-10 mins reading time, age-appropriateness Linked to topic Links ti learning outcomes and topics or events Novel studies set out by Literacy Base. particular author/illustrators quality of the work Previous knowledge of author related to topic Sometimes the illustrations look good but the story is rubbish subject links to topic/PSD/drama/RME To follow interests of children. to give children wider experience of a variety of stories To promote relationships between pupils (shared reading activities) Topic related topic related

Section 9: DOES IT WORK? HOW DO YOU EVALUATE WHETHER OR NOT THE STORY HAS MET YOUR PURPOSES?

38. The children show engagement (e.g.positive responses/request repeats/they retell the story)		
0:	0.0%	0
1:	0.2%	1
2:	0.8%	5
3:	5.6%	35
4:	29.8%	186
5:	63.6%	397

39. Formal assessment (e.g. worksheet, comprehension exercise, etc)		
0:	5.9%	37
1:	15.7%	98
2:	22.4%	140
3:	31.7%	198
4:	16.3%	102
5:	7.9%	49

40. Informal assessment (e.g. discussion, Q/A etc)		
0:	0.2%	1
1:	0.5%	3
2:	2.6%	16
3:	13.1%	82
4:	40.4%	252
5:	43.3%	270

APPENDIX 20 Permissions sought for the study
(papers i-xvii)

i) Participant Information Sheet: Storyteller Interviews

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require you to take part in a group interview lasting about half an hour.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. Your contribution will still be valued.).

RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you.
No one will link the data you provided to your school or to your identity and name .
The results will be published as part of a Doctoral Thesis by the University of Dundee. Participants and participating schools will not be identifiable

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Fiona McGarry will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact Fiona.

You may contact her at f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

FIONA MCGARRY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

SREC v. 1.10, 26 September 2007

ii) Participant Consent Form

TITLE OF PROJECT: USES OF STORY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

By signing below you are agreeing that you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet and that you agree to take part in this research study.

_____ _____

Participant's signature Date

FIONA MCGARRY
Printed name of person obtaining consent Signature of person obtaining consent

NOTE: The Consent Form should normally be separate from the Participant Information Sheet so that the participant has something they can keep.

iii) University of Dundee Ethics Form

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORM

Project title: USE OF STORY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM	
Name of Lead Investigator: FIONA MCGARRY	**School/Department:** ESWCE/EDUCATION
E-mail address: f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk	**Phone:** 81433
Status: ☒ Staff ☐ Student (If student, give supervisor's name):	
Other academic staff involved: ANGELA ROGER/DAVID MILLER (SUPERVISORS)	
Project start date: 17.10.07	**Project duration:** 6 YEARS
Date application submitted: 29.08.08	**UREC Ref no. (LEAVE BLANK):**

	YOU MUST ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS	YES	NO	N/A
1	Will you describe the main procedures in advance to participants so that they are informed about what to expect in your study?	☒	☐	☐
2	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
3	Will your participants be able to read and understand the participant information sheet?	☒	☐	☐
4	Will you obtain written informed consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
5	If the research is only observational (i.e. no experimental intervention or direct contact), will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☐	☐	☒
6	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time without penalty and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
7	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
8	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
9	Will you give participants a brief explanation of the purpose of the study at the end of their participation in it, and answer any questions?	☒	☐	☐
10	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way? If YES, you must provide a justification in the research protocol.	☐	☒	☐
11	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort? If **YES**, give details in the research protocol and state what you will tell them to do if they should experience any problems (e.g. who they can contact for help).	☐	☒	☐
12	Do the participants fall into any of the following special groups? If the answer is **YES**, indicate which group(s) by checking the appropriate box(es):	☒	☐	☐

☒ Children (under 18 years of age)
☐ Children (under 5 years of age)
☐ People with disability such as learning or communication difficulties.
Please specify disability:
☐ Pregnant women
☐ People studied with respect to contraception or conception
☐ People in custody
☐ People engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug-taking)
☐ Non-human animals
☐ Patients
☐ More than 5000 participants

NOTE: You may also need to obtain clearance from Disclosure Scotland or an equivalent authority.

You must check **either Box A or Box B** below and provide all relevant information in support of your application. If you answered **NO** to any of questions 1-9, or YES to any of questions 10-12 (with a pink background), then you **must** check Box B.

A: ☐ I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications to be brought to the attention of the University Research Ethics Committee.

Please provide a short study protocol in a separate document. The accompanying notes give additional information about how to write the protocol. Your protocol must include the following sections, and any others you think are necessary:

1. Project title.
2. Background information.
3. Aims and objectives of the study.
4. Brief description of participants and recruitment methods.
5. Brief description of the research methods and measurements. Include details of how the data will be securely stored.
6. Arrangements for participant information, consent and debriefing.
7. Estimated start date and duration.

You must also provide the intended Participant Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s), as well as copies of any questionnaires and details of interview questions you plan to use.

B: ☒ I consider that this project may have ethical implications that should be brought to the attention of the University Research Ethics Committee.

Please provide a short study protocol in a separate document. The accompanying notes give additional information about how to write the protocol. Your protocol must include the following sections, and any others you think are necessary:

1. Project title.
2. Background information.
3. Aims and objectives of the study.
4. Brief description of participants and recruitment methods.
5. Brief description of the research methods and measurements. Include details of how the data will be securely stored.
6. A clear statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them.
7. Arrangements for participant information, consent and debriefing.
8. Estimated start date and duration.

You must also provide the intended Participant Information Sheet(s) and Consent Form(s), as well as copies of any questionnaires and details of interview questions you plan to use.

Declaration

I am familiar with the University of Dundee *Code of Practice for Research on Human Participants*, which I have discussed with the other researchers involved in the project. I confirm that my research abides by these guidelines.

Signed ..... Date:
(Lead Investigator)

For undergraduate or postgraduate students:

Signed ..... Date:
(Supervisor)

There is an obligation on the Lead Researcher to bring to the attention of the Ethics Committee any issues with ethical implications not covered by the above checklists.

iv) Project Proposal - Supplementary Information

1. INVESTIGATION INTO HOW STORY IS USED TO SUPPORT LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS (P1-3) CLASSROOM

2. The purpose of the project is to discover the aims and purposes teachers have in using story, their delivery methods, and how effective these are, with a view to making recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning.

3. The study will be carried out by means of interview, questionnaire and self-reporting of and by teachers; and observation of interactions in classrooms by students. Pupils will also be interviewed. Data collected will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the University of Dundee in hard copy. In the case of interviews, these will be recorded and both tapes and transcripts stored in the same place.

4. Participants will be recruited by letter of request to schools, after permission to do so has been granted by the relevant Local Authority. The study will be in three parts:

    - Preliminary interviews will be held with a small number of participants from one school (6-8 members of teaching staff working in p1-3). It is likely that these will all be female (although this is not necessarily the case). Similar interviews will also be held with participants on the Oral storytelling course at Newbattle Abbey College.
    - In the second phase, questionnaires will be sent to all schools in the L.A. (57 schools, 100 -150 teachers of p1-3 classes, predominately female). These teachers will also be asked to complete a 'diary' which will be provided in the form of a proforma to record events relevant to the study. Student teachers will be recruited from the PGDE (P) programme, with appropriate permissions, to make observations (using predefined schedules) in classrooms of events relevant to the study (this will take place during their own Early Years Placement, and will provide them with a focus for observation which will inform their own practice). These students will take part in this study on a voluntary basis.
    - In the third phase, pupils from the same schools will be interviewed. They will be invited to do so on a

voluntary basis, and permission will be sought from L.A, school, parents and from pupils themselves. It is anticipated that 1,000 pupils would take part (ie 57 schools, 20 pupils per school = 1040). Children would be interviewed in mixed gender groups

.

5. All consents will be in written form, apart from pupils, whose consent will be oral. Information about the study will be clearly outlined and distributed along with consent forms. Children taking part will be given the same information which will be delivered to them in appropriate language by a familiar adult (their own class teacher will be asked to seek consent from pupils). Pupils will be offered the opportunity to withdraw their participation at any point during the interview process.

6. Ethical considerations:

- Confidentiality: in order to respect confidentiality names of L.A., schools, institutions and individuals will not be used.
- Accuracy: transcripts of interviews will be sent to participants for approval for accuracy on request. In the case of pupils, this would not be appropriate, therefore in this case a copy of both the tape AND the transcript will be sent to the school so that senior staff may check for correspondence.
- Full disclosure at every stage: all participating parties will be clearly informed as to the nature of the study at every stage (e.g. parents and pupils will be informed and permission sought when students are taking observation notes to feed back into the study)
- Students will be fully informed as to the purpose of the data they are being asked to collect
- Informed consent: age-appropriate language will be used to ensure children understand the purpose of the study. The interview process will be fully explained to children and children will have a familiarisation session with the interviewer prior to the interview.
- Willing consent: a familiar adult (class teacher) will propose participation to pupils in order to reduce pressure to conform to wishes of a visiting 'stranger'
- Interview contamination: the class teacher will not be present during the interview. This is because the children will be asked about classroom practices, and they should not feel pressure to seek approval from their teacher for their responses.

- Stress reduction: interviewers should have some experience of working with young children, and use language appropriate to their age group. It will therefore be necessary to brief interviewers and to provide clear guidelines which they should follow. The children will be interviewed in a class group to avoid pressure. Interviews will be recorded rather than notes taken.

7. Timescale: Part 1 – October-December 2008
Part 2 – Teacher Questionnaires: April – June 2009; student observations: May 2009
Part 3 – teacher/pupil interviews: Sept 2009-June 2010
Part 4 – National Survey: March-April 2012

v) Application for Undertaking Research in Angus Council Schools

Application for Undertaking Research
In Angus Council's Education Department

1 Title of research project: USES OF STORY IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

2 Name and address of corporate body you represent (if appropriate):
UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE
NETHERGATE
DUNDEE
Tel:01382 381433
Fax:
Postcode:

3 Name(s) and designation(s) of individual(s) conducting the research (first name should be head of project)
FIONA MCGARRY (LECTURER, EDUCATION)

4 Address and telephone number of research base (if different to 2 above)

Tel:
Fax:
Postcode:

5 Details of funding granted / applied for (delete as appropriate)
N/A

6 Please list all other agencies involved in this project, the nature of their involvement and a contact name. (This may be attached on a typewritten sheet)
N/A

7 Anticipated timescale of project:

Start **OCT08**

Finish **JUNE 2010**

8 Synopsis of project (including methodology)
(This may be attached in typewritten form)

1. The purpose of the project is to discover the aims and purposes teachers have in using story, their delivery methods, and how effective these are, with a view to making recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning.

2. The study will be carried out by means of interview, questionnaire and self-reporting of and by teachers; and observation of interactions in classrooms by students. Pupils will also be interviewed. Data collected will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the University of Dundee in hard copy. In the case of interviews, these will be recorded and both tapes and transcripts stored in the same place.

9 Describe the output of the project in terms of reports / thesis / articles / books etc

THE DATA WILL BE USED TO INFORM A DOCTORAL THESIS

10 Are you an / postgraduate? (Delete as appropriate)

If so what course are you studying? Ph.D

What stage are you at? Writing interview questions/questionnaires

11 Are you an employee of Angus Council? / NO (Delete as appropriate)

Tel:

Fax:

Postcode:

12 Please list the access and facilities you require from Angus Council (describe data, names of establishments and categories of personnel as appropriate)

I would like to have access to all p1-3 classes across Angus council – pupils and teachers. I would therefore require access to all Angus primary schools.

I do not require any facilities – all interviews would take place during normal school hours, and in the pupils' usual classrooms

13 Any other relevant information (including any likely benefit to the Education Authority)

As recommendations will be made which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

Pupils will be interviewed in a whole class situation so as to avoid stress.
Interviewers will be fully competent and experienced primary school teachers (GTC registered)
Consent will be sought at every stage by school, class teachers, parents and pupils.
Any pupil or teacher may withdraw consent at any time.
Anonymity of individuals and schools will be guaranteed.
Data collected will be securely stored.
Data collected will not be used for any other purpose.

The results of the research will be made available to participants and parents on request
Any queries will be addressed by the named researcher

Observations by students will be done as part of their normal school placement duties, and will also be subject to consent of school, parents, and pupils

14 DECLARATION by Applicant

I certify that the information given in this application is accurate and complete.

Signature _____

Date _____

Signature and name of officer of corporate body

Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____

To be completed by Angus Council

15 Approval of research request

a) Approved without conditions ☐

b) Approved with conditions ☐

c) Undecided ☐

d) Refused ☐

Please tick the appropriate box and give further details / reasons below for categories (b), (c) and (d).

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signature of establishment head _____ **Date** _____

Signature of authorised officer _____ **Date** _____

The information you have provided on this form will be used by Angus Council (the "data Controller" for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998) in order to process your request to conduct research in Angus schools and managing our database. The information will be held securely by the Council and will be treated as confidential except where the law requires it to be disclosed.

Please return to: Mr Peter Duguid, Principal Quality Improvement Officer. Educational Development Service, Ravenswood, New Road, Forfar DD8 2ZW (Tel No: 01307 473603 Fax: 01307 466785 E-mail: DuguidP@angus.gov.uk)

vi) Participant Information Sheet Teacher Questionnaire: Angus Survey

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require a questionnaire to be completed. This should take about 20 minutes of your time.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. Your contribution will still be valued.).

RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you.
No one will link the data you provided to your school or to your identity and name .
The results will be published as part of a Doctoral Thesis by the University of Dundee. Participants and participating schools will not be identifiable

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Fiona McGarry will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact Fiona.

You may contact her at f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

FIONA MCGARRY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION , UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

vi) Participant Information Sheet: Teacher/Students Survey: Angus Study

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require you to allow a student to observe classroom interactions during a regular placement.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. Your contribution will still be valued.

RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you.
No one will link the data you provided to your school or to your identity and name .
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION , UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

SREC v. 1.10, 26 September 2007

vii) Participant Information Sheet Pupil Questionnaire: Dundee Primary

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require a questionnaire to be completed by the pupils in your class. This should take about 30 minutes.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. Your contribution will still be valued.

RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you.
No one will link the data you provided to your school or to your identity and name .
The results will be published as part of a Doctoral Thesis by the University of Dundee. Participants and participating schools will not be identifiable

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Fiona McGarry will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact Fiona.

You may contact her at f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

FIONA MCGARRY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION , UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

viii) Participant Information Sheet Pupil Questionnaire: Dundee Primary

DUNDEE PRIMARY QUESTIONNAIRE/SURVEY (to be read to pupils)

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I would like your help. I am trying to find out what you think about the stories I read to you last time I was here.

I work at Dundee University, and I teach people who are studying to become teachers.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This will help me to tell teachers what kinds of stories work best, and will help them when they are choosing stories for their own classes.

TIME COMMITMENT

I will give you some questions to answer and it will last about half an hour (or "up till morning break" or similar). You don't have to worry about your writing or spelling – I am not going to mark your answers.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You can answer as many or as few of the questions as you like – it is up to you. Whatever you say is helpful.

RISKS n/a

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION n/a

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

I won't use your name

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

I will be glad to answer your questions about my work.

SREC v. 1.10, 26 September 2007

x) Participant Information Sheet Pupil Interviews: Angus Study

ANGUS PUPIL INTERVIEWS (to be read to pupils)

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I would like to talk to you about stories. I am trying to find out what kinds of stories you listen to in your classroom, and what you think about them.
My name is Fiona McGarry and I work at Dundee University.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This will help me to tell other teachers what kinds of stories work best, and will help them when they are choosing stories for their own classes.

TIME COMMITMENT

We will have a chat in the class about this, and it will last about half an hour (or "up till morning break" or similar)

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You can join in or not – it is up to you. Whatever you say is helpful.

RISKS n/a

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION n/

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

We won't use your name

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

I will be glad to answer your questions about my work.

xi) Participant Information Sheet Student Observations: Angus Study

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require a written questionnaire to be completed, and a log to be kept over a period of one week.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. Your contribution will still be valued.).

RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you.
No one will link the data you provided to your school or to your identity and name .
The results will be published as part of a Doctoral Thesis by the University of Dundee. Participants and participating schools will not be identifiable

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Fiona McGarry will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact Fiona.

You may contact her at f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

FIONA MCGARRY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION , UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

xii) Participant Information Sheet Teacher Interviews: Angus Study

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

You are being asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require an interview to be completed with one session of one hour.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. Your contribution will still be valued.).

RISKS

There are no known risks for you in this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about you.
No one will link the data you provided to your school or to your identity and name .
The results will be published as part of a Doctoral Thesis by the University of Dundee. Participants and participating schools will not be identifiable

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Fiona McGarry will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact Fiona.

You may contact her at f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

FIONA MCGARRY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION , UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study

xiii) Participant Information Sheet Parent Information: Angus Study

USE OF STORY IN SUPPORTING LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE EARLY YEARS CLASSROOM

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Your child will be asked to take part in a research study, which looks at the various ways story is used to support learning and teaching in the early years classroom. The study is being undertaken by Fiona McGarry, from the School of Education, Dundee University, and is being supervised by Dr Angela Roger, also of the School of Education, Dundee University

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study aims to investigate the different purposes teachers may have for using story, the different delivery methods which are employed, and to assess the effectiveness of these in order to make recommendations which may be used to enhance teaching and learning. Participation in this research would benefit both current and future Early Years practitioners, and may also be of interest to teachers working at other stages of the primary school.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study will require your child to take part in a whole class discussion on the subject , which will last no longer than half an hour.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

Your child may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. His/her contribution will still be valued.

RISKS

There are no known risks associated with this study.

COST, REIMBURSEMENT AND COMPENSATION

Participation in this study is voluntary.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data we collect do not contain any personal information about your child. No one will link the data you provided to your child's school or to his/her identity and name .

The results will be published as part of a Doctoral Thesis by the University of Dundee. Participants and participating schools will not be identifiable

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY

Fiona McGarry will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact Fiona.

You may contact her at f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

FIONA MCGARRY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION , UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

DUNDEE

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

xiv) Permission Letter Parent Information: Angus Study

University of Dundee
Nethergate
Dundee DD1 4HN
Scotland UK
t+44(0)1382 384015
f+44(0)1382 388090

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am researching the ways stories are used in the primary school classroom as part of a study at the University of Dundee.

I am a primary school teacher of many years' experience, and I would like to talk to schoolchildren about their views on the stories they hear in class, and hope that you will give your permission for your child to be included in a group discussion about this.

I have attached a consent form and an information sheet about my project. The discussion will be very informal, and will take place in the children's usual classroom. The children will be asked if they wish to take part, and if your child does not want to do so, his/her decision will be respected.

If you agree to allow your child to be part of this discussion, please complete and return the consent form (attached). I hope to conduct these interviews during the month of June 2010, and so an early response would be very much appreciated.

Thank you,

Fiona McGarry
University of Dundee

xv) Communications re National Survey

TO HEAD TEACHERS:
Dear Head Teacher,

I am conducting a national survey on Scottish Primary teachers' use of story in the classroom as part of a research project on primary practice. The survey is based at the University of Dundee, and is being conducted in association with the Scottish Storytelling Centre and Scottish Youth Theatre. Education Scotland has agreed to provide a link to the survey on their national GLOW noticeboard. I am keen to reach as widely representative a sample of primary teachers, and to that end I wonder if you might be able to promote the link to your staff? Permission has been granted by your Local Education Authority for this research to take place in Stirling schools.

The details are as follows:

The survey forms part of a national study on the use of story in the primary classroom by the University of Dundee. It takes about 5 minutes to complete, and as a "thank you", teachers completing the survey will be entered into a prize draw for a 15- book Roald Dahl Collection. The results of the survey, and the implications for practice arising from these will be shared via GLOW when the data analysis has been completed.

The survey will be open until **25.5.12,** and the URL is:

http://www.survey.dundee.ac.uk/story

I hope that is sufficient info for you, and that you will be able to share this with your teachers . If you need any further info, please let me know. I would be grateful for your support in helping to share this link.

Yours,

Fiona McGarry

TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES:

I am conducting a survey (see below) on behalf of the University of Dundee, and would appreciate the responses of primary teachers in your LEA. In order to reach these teachers, I hope you will be able to share the following information with them:
The survey will be open between **2.4.12 - 25.5.12**, and the URL is:
http://www.survey.dundee.ac.uk/story
The survey forms part of a national study on the use of story in the primary classroom by the University of Dundee, in association with Scottish Youth Theatre and The Scottish Storytelling Centre. The survey will take about 5 minutes to complete, and as a "thank you",

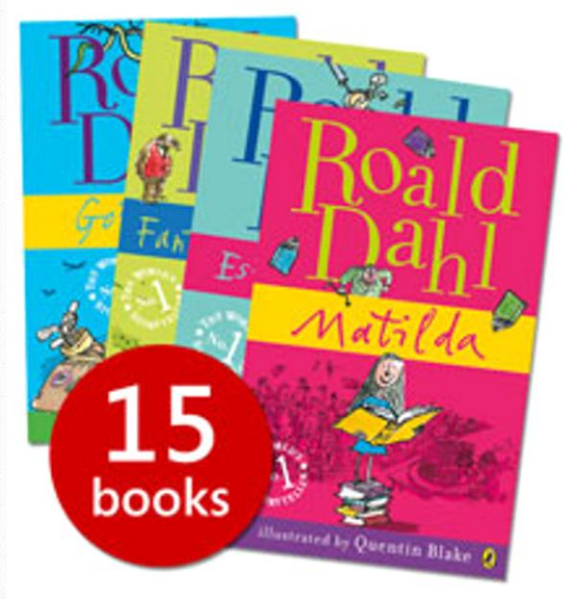
teachers completing the survey will be entered into a **prize draw** for a 15- book Roald Dahl Collection. The results of the survey, and the implications for practice arising from these will be shared via GLOW when the data analysis has been completed.
I hope that is sufficient info for you, and that you will be able to place this in your schools newletter for april/may. If you need any further info, please let me know. Thank you so much for your supporting helping to share this research.
Regards,
Fi McGarry
Lecturer, E.S.W.C.E.
University of Dundee
tel: 01382 981433

TO HEAD TEACHERS (FOLLOW-UP COMMUNICATION):
Dear Head Teacher
I hope you will be able to share the link on the attached flyer about a National Survey of Primary Teachers with your staff. All primary schools in Scotland have been approached, and most LEAs have already responded. I hope to be able to add the views of the (LEA NAME) teachers to this survey which takes only 5 minutes to complete. Your LEA has been informed of this, and the link is also available via the GLOW portal. A small prize is being offered as a thank you for participation.
Thank you,
Yours
Fi McGarry

xvi) Survey Flyer (email attachment)

University of Dundee

National Story Survey



CALLING ALL PRIMARY TEACHERS!!
A chance to win a Roald Dahl book collection
for 5 minutes of your time!

just visit

www.survey.dundee.ac.uk/story

for more info contact

f.mcgarry@dundee.ac.uk

APPENDIX 21
Herman, D. Personal communication

Re: Narratology - a question and a request

Herman, David [herman.145@osu.edu]
13 October 2012 14:16

To: Fiona McGarry

Dear Fiona McGarry:

Thank you very much for your message and for sending on this outline of your thesis research. Based on the outline you provide, I do think that your claim that your project falls under the rubric of cognitive narratology is an accurate one.

In a book I've just completed, I argue that one major strand of work on issues of narrative and mind concerns how narrative affords resources for making sense of the world. (The other major strands concerns how stories constitute targets of interpretation.) In these terms, your study would indeed fall within this domain of research.

Best of luck, in any case, with your thesis research!
David

On Oct 13, 2012, at 10:07 AM, Fiona McGarry wrote:

Professor Herman,
I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Dundee, Scotland. My thesis investigates aspects of the use of story as a resource for teaching and learning in the primary (elementary) school classroom. I have read some of your work with great interest. I am contacting you on the advice on my own supervisor, who feels that this field is outwith the expertise of my own institution, in order to ask whether, in your opinion, the claim I make (below) for situating this study within the field of cognitive narratology appears to be an accurate one (although I recognise that I am presenting you with a very limited idea of the general scope of the study)
My question centres on locating my own work within a series of conceptual and theoretical frameworks, which I have identified as follows:

1. STORY - LEARNING - TEACHING

2. NARRATOLOGY -COGNITIVISM-PEDAGOGY

The three layers (above) represent:

1. concepts addressed by the study. These are the ideas, or general notions, that motivated the project.
2. theoretical bases for the concepts. Theories represent systems of ideas that are intended to explain something.
3. aspects of theory. These are subsections of the theoretical approaches to which they are linked.

The study is conceptualised in terms of three key ideas (see layer 1 above): story, learning and teaching. These are informed by a theoretical framework drawing on the areas of narratology, cognitivism and pedagogy (above, layer 2,), from which the aspects of history of story, story structure, narrative understanding, constructivism, metaphor and analogy and pedagogical approaches are derived (layer 3 above,) as being of particular relevance to the study in hand. As can be seen in the above figure, there is some degree of overlap in the theoretical aspects which link layers 2 and 3.+ The study sits, therefore, within the field of cognitive narratology (specifically, psychology and education, although elements of the study fall into the domains of sociology and, to a lesser extent, anthropology). It includes discussion of constructivist pedagogy. It explores the use of storytelling as a teaching method and seeks to establish the extent of story use as an educational medium in the Scottish primary school classroom. Discussion of learning theory in terms of different cognitive modes is used to examine how learning theory might apply to the use of story as a vehicle for learning.
I hope that you do not mind me contacting you in this way, and that you will perhaps be able to offer some advice re the appropriateness of my assertion.
Thank you, sir, for your time.
Yours,
Fiona McGarry